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Story on PAGE A2

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ROBBERS/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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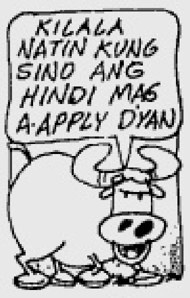
By Blanche Rivera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WANTED/ A8

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Wednesday, February 11, 2004 ★★ 68 pages / 7 sections / vol. 19 / no. 65 P15
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Lights, camera, action

ELECTION 2004

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Poe defines RP problem: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

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Early birds caught over illegal posters

By Martin P. Marfil and Leila B. Salaverria

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EARLY/ A5

GMA launches bid for redemption in Laguna

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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GMA/ A19

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VAL HANDUMON

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PING/ A9

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By Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio

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ROCO/ A20

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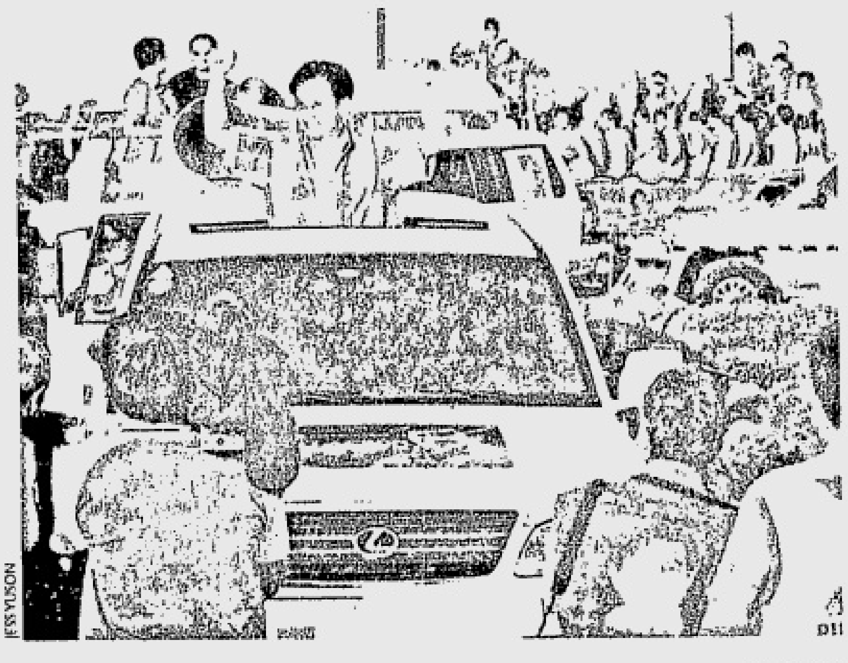

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2004

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms becoming widespread over the eastern section. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/11/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

RP-US war games in Spratlys

By Alcuin Papa

FILIPINO and American troops will participate in a new round of war exercise in non-traditional venues Batanes and Palawan, including the Spratlys, a cluster of islands contested by the Philippines and five other countries.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia said yesterday that 2,300 Filipino soldiers will be joined by 2,500 American troops in the annual combat and live fire maneuvers called Balikatan '04 from Feb. 23 to March 4.

The exercises will focus on conventional warfare with some input on counter-terrorism.

Garcia explained that this year's exercises will be three-tiered. Aside from command post exercises, there will be cross-training and field training exercises. Civil and humanitarian assistance programs will be conducted by the American troops.

Aside from Batanes and Palawan, the other venues in the two-week exercises are Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, Clark Air Base in Pampanga, Crow Valley in Zambales and the Marine base in Ternate, Cavite.

The first batch of American soldiers will arrive on Feb. 13. The US team is bringing 46 assorted aircraft including the C-12 Galaxy transport aircraft, the C-130 Hercules cargo and personnel transport craft and the CH-53 and CH-46 transport choppers.

Aircraft from the Philippine armed forces include the OV-10 attack aircrafts, the MG-520s and SF-260s and other choppers. Patrol gunboats from the Philippine Navy will also be used.

The Philippine exercise director, Brig. Gen. Rafael Romero, said there was also a plan for a beach landing exercise at Dingalan Bay, off Aurora province, about 110 km north of Manila. Communist guerrillas are active in the mountainous region.

Adequate security has been prepared for all the venues, Romero said.

The annual exercises, launched under a 1951 defense treaty to prepare the longtime military allies for joint combat, are aimed at dealing with external threats but would also deal in part with anti-terrorism scenarios, Romero said.

"This is not aimed at any singular threat," he said. "We just want to be prepared ahead of any crisis."

In recent years, US forces have also carried out anti-terrorist training in Mindanao, where the Philippine military has been fighting Muslim separatists and the extremist group Abu Sayyaf. *With reports from AP and Reuters*

More chicken smuggled in, says agri chief

By Volt Contreras and Tonette Orejas and Carmela Reyes, *PDI Central Luzon Desk*

AN UNAUTHORIZED shipment of imported chicken reached a southern Luzon port on Monday despite the government ban on the import poultry products from countries with known cases of bird flu, said Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr.

The shipment, which was seized by the DA's anti-smuggling task force early yesterday, came from the the United States and did not have import documents and a veterinary quarantine certificate that guarantees whether the meat was safe to eat, said Lorenzo.

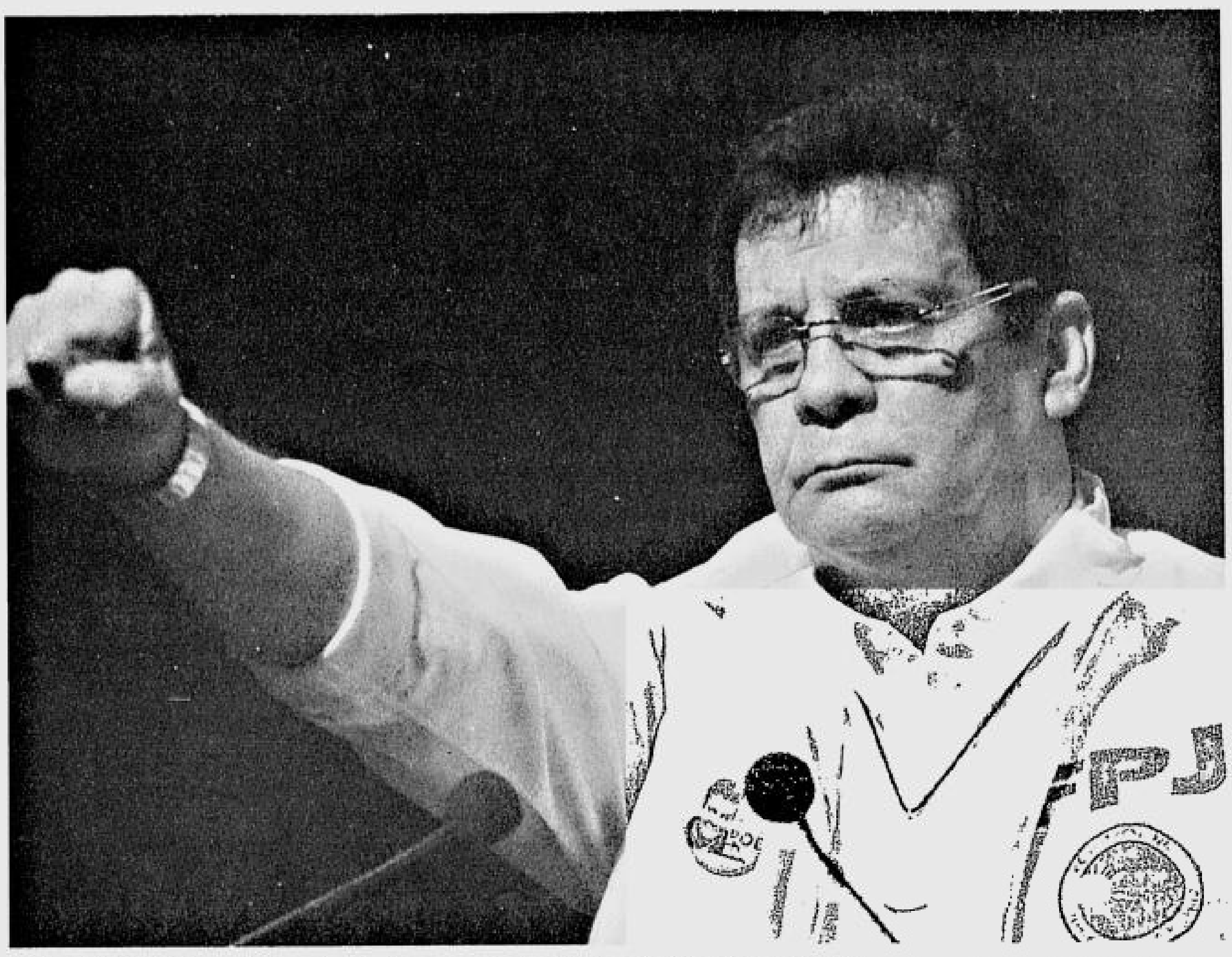
The government has announced a ban on poultry items from the US state of Delaware on top of an earlier ban against poultry products from 10 Asian countries with reported cases of avian flu.

The country's chicken imports from the US come from the US West Coast and Arkansas.

The five container vans containing chicken leg quarters and frozen dried potatoes arrived at the port of Batangas on Monday night, said Lorenzo.

The entire shipment was estimated to be worth P12.5 million.

A meat inspection team from the agriculture department is now checking if the poultry is contaminated, according to Lorenzo.



A CLENCHED FIST punctuates the short speech of Fernando Poe Jr. at the official launching of the campaign of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP) at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City.
EDWIN BACASMAS

GMA appoints 2 to Comelec

JUST in time for the three-month campaign period, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday filled up the two vacant slots in the Commission on Elections.

Press Secretary Milton Alingod announced the appointment of new commissioners Manuel Barcelona Jr. and Virgilio Olivar Garcellano. They replaced Luzviminda Tancangco and Ralph Lantion, who retired from the seven-member Comelec board on Feb. 2.

Barcelona and Garcellano are assuming the posts at a time when the poll body is overseeing country's most contentious elections in nearly two decades.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye earlier said the new commissioners would be chosen based on their "competence, integrity and capability to properly enforce election laws." *Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Martin P. Marfil*

Avert Armageddon, bar FPJ, SC asked

By Philip C. Tubeza

INSISTING that "Armageddon" could be averted if opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. were pulled out of the race, lawyer Victorino Fornier yesterday asked the Supreme Court to disqualify the actor on the ground that he is not a natural-born Filipino citizen.

In a 64-page petition for certiorari, Fornier asked the tribunal to set aside the Commission on Elections' dismissal of his initial petition against Poe's candidacy, issue a temporary restraining order against the poll body, and then rule on the matter.

He also urged the SC to direct the Comelec to cancel Poe's certificate of candidacy.

"There will be no civil war, no chaos, no Armageddon, if and when it is finally decided that 'Da King' is disqualified to run for the presidency," Fornier said.

That the masses would take up arms in defense of Poe was "at most, highly debatable," the lawyer said. He explained: "A good number of those who would bestir the people into reckless adventures are themselves not of the masses."

Fornier's brother Andresito, who filed the petition at around 1:30 p.m., told reporters that Poe was "wasting his time" campaigning.

The petition reiterated the argument that Poe was not a natural-born Filipino citizen, having been born on Aug. 20, 1939 to Allan F. Poe and American Bessie Kelly, who were not married at the time. Being an illegitimate child at birth, FPJ thus assumed the citizenship of his mother, Fornier said.

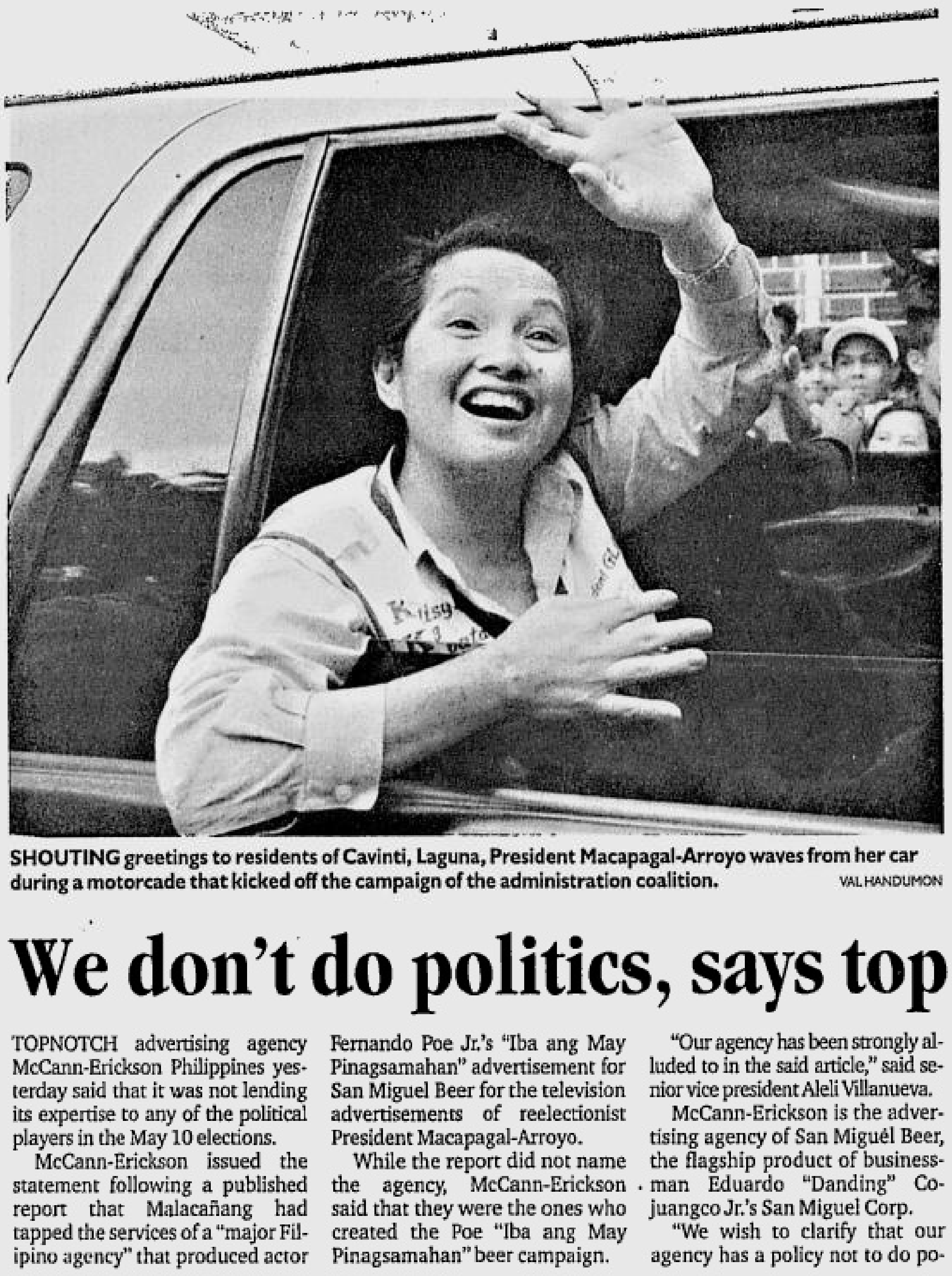
Poe might have been subsequently legitimized, the lawyer added, but definitely he wasn't a "natural-born citizen" or one who, according to the law, was "a citizen of the country from birth without having to perform any act to acquire or perfect his Philippine citizenship."

The actor's parents were wed on Sept. 16, 1940, the petition pointed out, citing documents presented by Poe's own lawyers. "Hence... for a period of more than one year, respondent was not a Filipino."

Fornier added that Poe "utterly failed" to prove that his parents voluntarily acknowledged him formally as their offspring. He said the only evidence of some kind of acknowledgment that Poe presented was his birth certificate, which was not signed by his father.

"The father of a child born out of wedlock is required to sign at the dorsal of said Certificate of Birth, if he has every intention of acknowledging the child as his own," Fornier noted.

Therefore, he concluded, Poe was still illegitimate, American, guilty of material representation, and should be disqualified.



SHOUTING greetings to residents of Cavinti, Laguna, President Macapagal-Arroyo waves from her car during a motorcade that kicked off the campaign of the administration coalition.
VAL HANDUMON

Penniless man lends drama to GMA drive

By Volt Contreras

FOR THE FIRST time since the Marcos regime, an incumbent President with government resources at her disposal is running for another term—and this advantage enjoyed by President Macapagal-Arroyo was obvious on her first day on the campaign trail.

A penniless man with two ailing sons became the instant recipient of presidential assistance when he publicly pleaded for Ms Macapagal's help as she was making a pitch before Laguna local officials.

Oscar Lintac practically interrupted the *pulong bayan* (town meeting) that the President and her running mate Sen. Noli de Castro was holding at the Burol Elementary School in Cavinti town, her first stop in the 90-day campaign period.

Lintac suddenly broke away from the crowd of about 200 that formed a semi-circle around the presidential party, and approached the President with his frail son Richard, 14, who suffers from cerebral palsy, according to Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman.

The man, who was in his 40s, was in tears when he relayed his plight to the President, recalled Soliman, who said Ms Macapagal immediately referred Lintac to her.

Another witness related how Lintac, cradling Richard in his arms, fell to his knees as he approached the President, "like in the Pieta" of Michelangelo.

It turned out that Lintac has another son, 4-year-old Christopher, who is also afflicted with cerebral palsy.

The Lintacs will receive "food packages for two weeks" courtesy of the DSWD and a zero-interest loan of between P5,000 to P50,000 depending on the kind of small business they are capable of running. They also will be given the option of entrusting the two boys to the care of social workers.

Soliman explained that "we've been doing this even without the election period. It's public service."

But she also said Cabinet officials dealing with social services are now expected to show "more rigor in delivering services" to the people.

On 1st day of campaign, he rested

By Blanche S. Rivera

ON THE FIRST day of the official campaign period, he rested.

While other presidential candidates were off on sensational opening salvos yesterday, evangelist Eddie Villanueva went quietly from one meeting to another.

Bishop Fred Magbanua, one of the directors of Task Force Pagbabago, which is behind Villanueva's campaign, said the Christian leader decided to take a rest and spend some time in prayer.

Magbanua said that Villanueva, spiritual director of the Jesus Is Lord Church Worldwide, was also preparing for the big event at the Araneta Coliseum at 6 p.m. today. Villanueva's staff, he said, was refining the candidate's 10-point priority program.

Villanueva's campaign will kick off in Hong Kong with a Migrante convention on Feb. 14 and 15. Before that, he would be engrossed in "meetings and media interviews," according to his media bureau.

We don't do politics, says top advertising agency

TOPNOTCH advertising agency McCann-Erickson Philippines yesterday said that it was not lending its expertise to any of the political players in the May 10 elections.

McCann-Erickson issued the statement following a published report that Malacañang had tapped the services of a "major Filipino agency" that produced actor Fernando Poe Jr.'s "Iba ang May Pinagsamahan" advertisement for San Miguel Beer for the television advertisements of reelectionist President Macapagal-Arroyo.

While the report did not name the agency, McCann-Erickson said that they were the ones who created the Poe "Iba ang May Pinagsamahan" beer campaign.

"Our agency has been strongly alluded to in the said article," said senior vice president Aleli Villanueva.

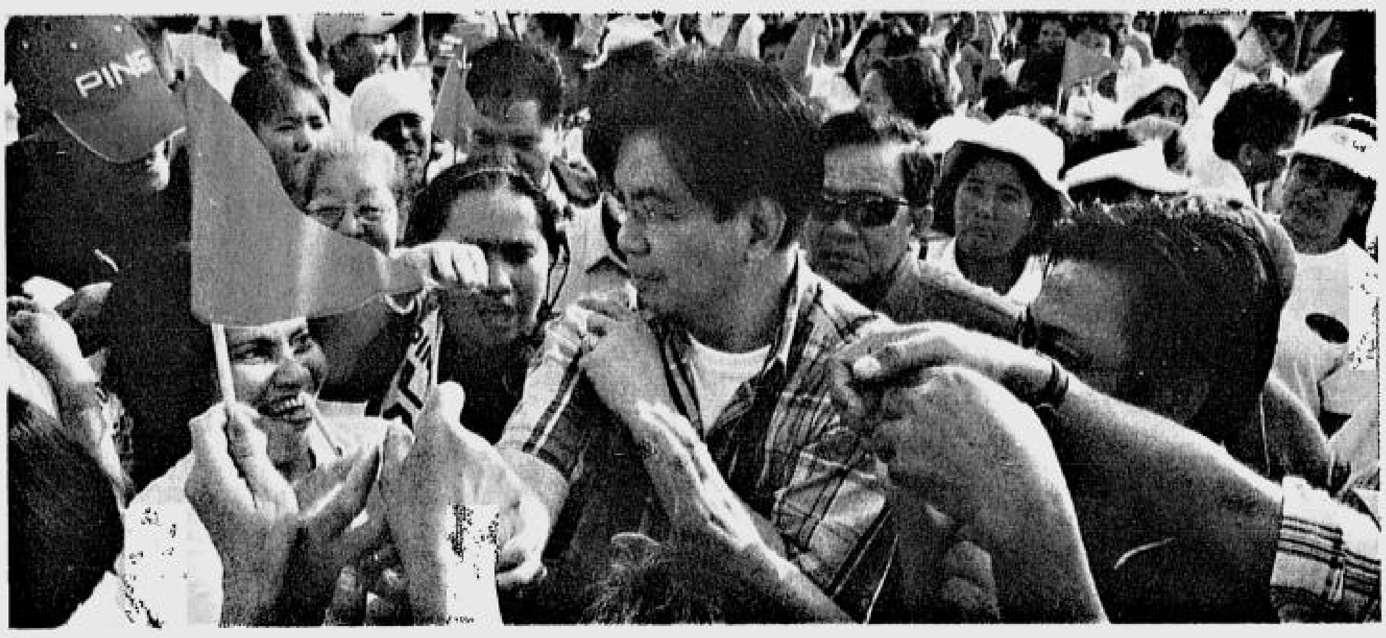
McCann-Erickson is the advertising agency of San Miguél Beer, the flagship product of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.'s San Miguel Corp.

"We wish to clarify that our agency has a policy not to do political campaigns," Villanueva said. "If there are individuals who wish to do so, they should take a leave of absence."

The published report mentioned the supposed employment of an advertising agency to provide inputs for Ms Macapagal's television advertisements.

The report claimed that Malacañang employed the Filipino agency behind the beer advertisement to make sure that the Macapagal advertisements "connect" with the Filipino people.

Villanueva, however, said that "any of our senior officers would have been able to negate the claim" had McCann-Erickson been reached for verification.



OPENING SALVO
Day one of the official campaign period for the May 10 presidential elections sees two presidential candidates taking different tacks in different places. Alyansa ng Pagasa standard bearer Raul Roco opens his campaign with a visit to the Jose Rizal College in Mandaluyong City, where he is mobbed by students who will be old enough to vote only in the 2010 elections. Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino independent candidate Panfilo Lacson, who is without a ticket, kicks off his campaign in his home province, Cavite. ERIK ARAZAS/JESS YUSON

RP envoy gets feel of elite UN club

By Jerome Aning

PHILIPPINE ambassador to the United Nations Lauro Baja Jr. does not see himself transformed into a demigod now that he is the country's chief representative in the world organization's powerful Security Council.

In a statement on the Philippines' first month of participation as a non-permanent member of the Council, Baja said he and the Filipino delegation did feel they were seen as "first among equals" by other UN member-countries.

He recalled that when the Philippines won the election for membership in the Council last year, the ambassador of Spain, a Council member, told him, "You cease to be a mortal when you sit in the Council next year. You will become a demigod."

"The first thing that hit us participating in the Council meetings is its exclusivity," he recalled. "We feel we really belong to an elite club, with access to meeting rooms and information not available to the rest of the UN members," he said.

The "rest" were consigned to corridors and other public places waiting for official and unofficial briefing by Council members.

Baja said the demands and expectations from member delegations for constructive ideas on security and related matters can be awesome.

He observed that the agenda of the Council were replete with issues on wars—whether localized or regional, or with distinct global impact like the war on terrorism, in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

Baja recalled a conversation with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who hoped that last year's division in the Council, caused by the US-led invasion of Iraq, would turn to reconciliation and convergence of positions this year.

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Pro-Lacson officers face isolation in PNP

By Christian V. Esguerra

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"To me that's unacceptable," he said. "If I had valid gripes, I would not be afraid to be identified."

But the PCAI admitted it had no control over some members who might be quietly supporting the presidential bid of Lacson, a former PNP chief.

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It was unclear, for instance, if the PNP would push through with the "special examination" that Ebdane had requested from the Civil Service Commission allegedly to propel the promotion of "his boys" to the rank of chief superintendent.

A griping senior superintendent said the CSC cancelled the test, originally set last Feb. 8, because of the complaints.

Another complaint that got anything but clear response from the PNP chief, the senior superintendent said, was the police's failure to solve the murder of Chief Supt. John Campos, a Lacson protege, more than a year ago in Parañaque City. He said a member of Campos' PMA Class 1987 had stood up during the open forum to air this concern.

Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, PCAI president, said the Campos murder was not easy to solve because of the absence of witnesses.

Lacson was suspected of ordering the assassination allegedly to keep Campos from squealing on his purported involvement in criminal activities.

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Fisherman tells of ordeal at sea

By Leila B. Salaverria

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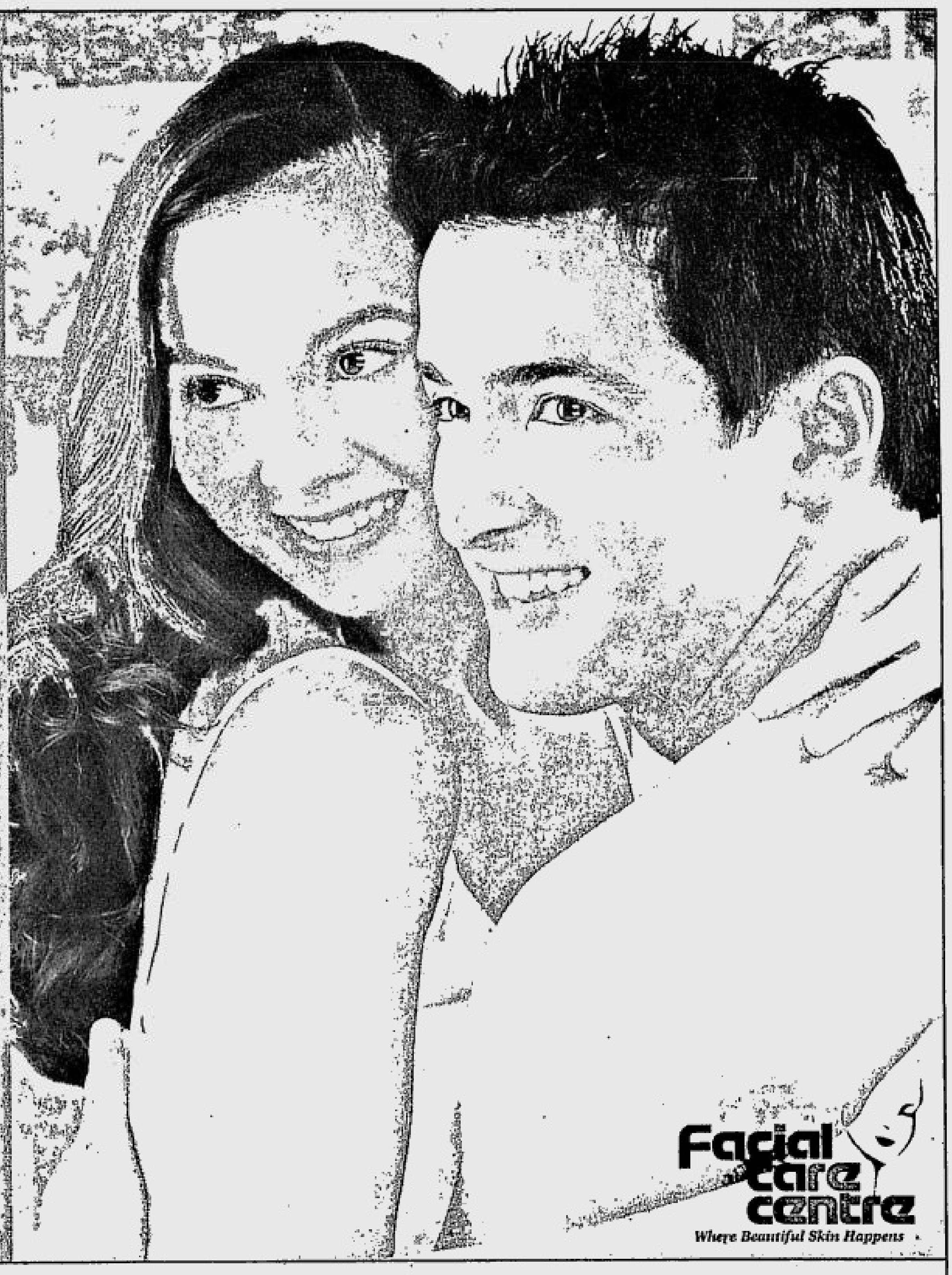

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OPENING SALVO
Day one of the official campaign period for the May 10 presidential elections sees two presidential candidates taking different tacks in different places. Alyansa ng Pagasa standard bearer Raul Roco opens his campaign with a visit to the Jose Rizal College in Mandaluyong City, where he is mobbed by students who will be old enough to vote only in the 2010 elections. Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino independent candidate Panfilo Lacson, who is without a ticket, kicks off his campaign in his home province, Cavite. ERIK ARAZAS/JESS YUSON

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RP envoy gets feel of elite UN club

By Jerome Aning

PHILIPPINE ambassador to the United Nations Lauro Baja Jr. does not see himself transformed into a demigod now that he is the country's chief representative in the world organization's powerful Security Council.

In a statement on the Philippines' first month of participation as a non-permanent member of the Council, Baja said he and the Filipino delegation did feel they were seen as "first among equals" by other UN member-countries.

He recalled that when the Philippines won the election for membership in the Council last year, the ambassador of Spain, a Council member, told him, "You cease to be a mortal when you sit in the Council next year. You will become a demigod."

"The first thing that hit us participating in the Council meetings is its exclusivity," he recalled. "We feel we really belong to an elite club, with access to meeting rooms and information not available to the rest of the UN members," he said.

The "rest" were consigned to corridors and other public places waiting for official and unofficial briefing by Council members.

Baja said the demands and expectations from member delegations for constructive ideas on security and related matters can be awesome.

He observed that the agenda of the Council were replete with issues on wars—whether localized or regional, or with distinct global impact like the war on terrorism, in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

Baja recalled a conversation with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who hoped that last year's division in the Council, caused by the US-led invasion of Iraq, would turn to reconciliation and convergence of positions this year.

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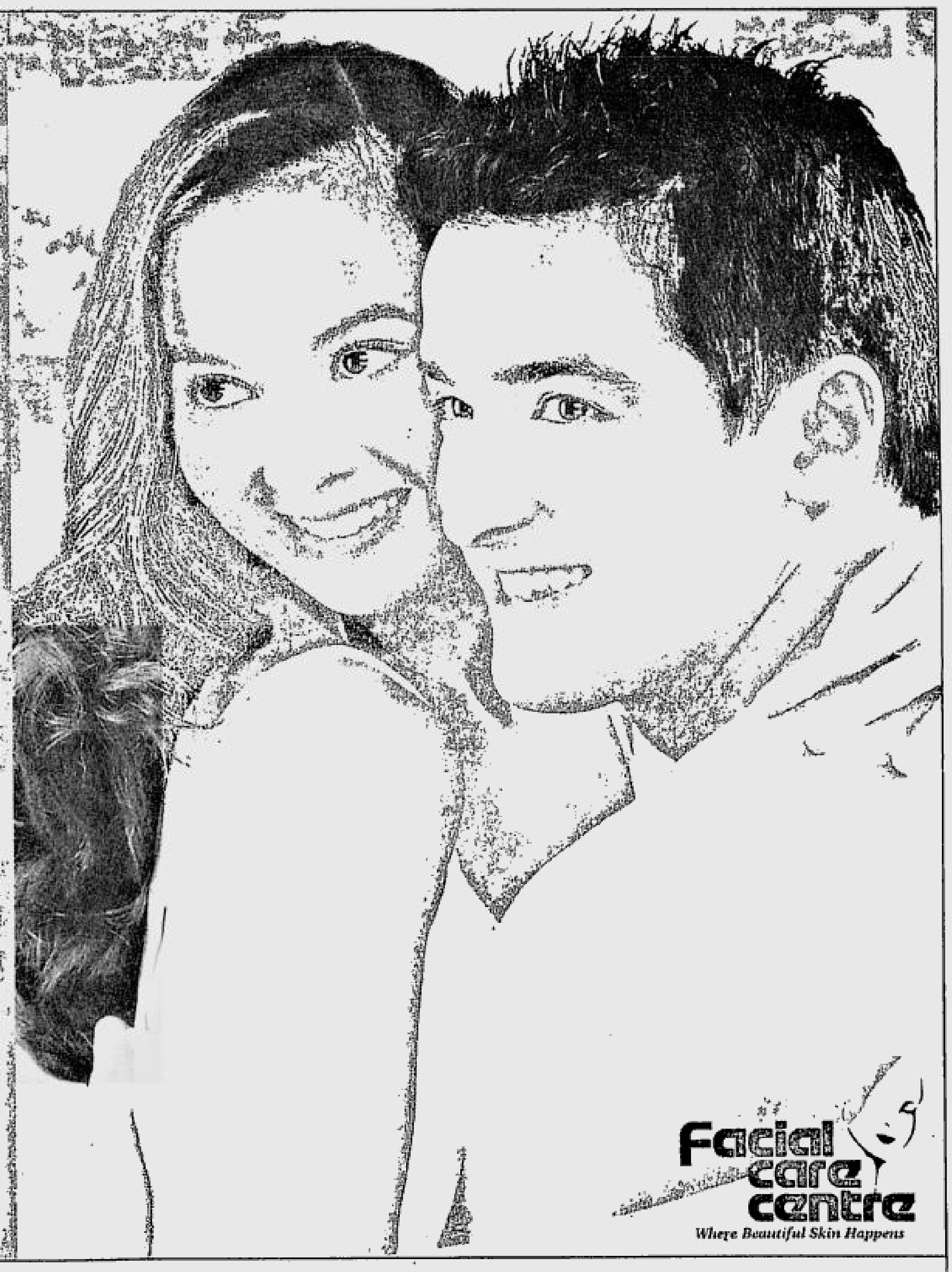

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GMA has high hopes for Oslo peace talks …

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo remained optimistic the peace talks between the government and communist rebels would be successful and resolved quickly despite warnings from a splinter group of the Communist Party of the Philippines that the negotiations were doomed to fail.

"The peace talks are off to a good start. It is now up for both camps to sustain the momentum by mutual sincerity in forging a final agreement amenable to both parties and serving the interest of the Filipino," said Ms Macapagal in a statement.

The President also confirmed that the negotiations with the National Democratic Front in Oslo, Norway, was part of the platform of her coalition party, K-4.

"We shall win on the strength of our commitment to peace, reconciliation and development," the President said.

Reelectionist Sen. Rodolfo Biazon declared support for the administration's drive to jumpstart the stalled negotiations and expressed hopes it would lead to genuine economic, political and social reforms.

Biazon, a former chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said he was optimistic that the four-day talks between the government and NDF panels in Oslo would yield significant results that could lead into the signing of a final agreement.

"The road to peace is a long winding road, but we must continue. It yielded different results at different phases. President Macapagal's efforts to continue the peace process could give us the right steps, so let it be," Biazon said.

A spokesperson of the Partido ng Manggagawang Pilipino, which has challenged the leadership of CPP founder Jose Maria Sison, chided the President for using efforts to forge a peace accord with the communists to earn "brownie points'" and bolster her bid for a new term.

The government negotiating panel has declared its eagerness to wrap up a peace accord before the May 10 elections but the NDF was less optimistic saying that at best, only half of the areas to be covered by the talks would be finished by then.

A Malacañang statement yesterday said both sides of the negotiating table were keen on having an "enhanced" and "accelerated" process to a permanent cessation of hostilities.

The government peace panel, led by Silvestre Bello III, wanted to discuss the socio-economic reforms and political and constitutional reforms at the same time while the NDF wanted the substantial items be tackled sequentially but with a shortened time frame.

"If we get their commitment, our people can sleep soundly in the next 10 to 20 years," Bello said in the statement.

…But NDF not so confident of final accord before May 10

By Christian V. Esguerra

HUMAN rights issues and social and economic reforms topped the agenda at yesterday's resumption of formal peace negotiations in Norway even as communist rebels were skeptical of the prospects of a final peace agreement before the May 10 elections.

"The problem is that the government projects the signing of a final peace agreement before the elections. But the situation is different from the actual negotiations," Fidel Agcaoili, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front panel, told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview from the Norwegian capital of Oslo.

Contrary to the government's expectation, only the creation of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) and the implementation of social and economic reforms would be the logical accomplishments in three months, he said.

Both panels yesterday outlined the agenda which included the setting up of the JMC to implement the 1998 Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and the continuation of reciprocal working committees for social and economic reforms.

Part of the human rights aspect of peace talks is the indemnification of around 10,000 martial law victims.

Luis Jalandoni, chair of the NDF panel, said he and his fellow negotiators would seek at least a "guarantee" that the victims would get the P11-billion compensation allocated for them.

De La Salle University

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Since its founding early 2003, the FBSC has been providing seminars and workshops on a regular basis, tackling family business issues such as succession / generational transfer, resolving conflicts in family firms, and professionalizing family businesses. The Center draws from the expertise of the professors of De La Salle University-Manila, as well as from the University's wide network of alumni entrepreneurs and businessmen.

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Interested parties may also contact the Center to consult about specific company-level concerns. The Center can conduct an initial needs analysis for the company, and design a program that will help the company address its immediate and long-term concerns.

For inquiries, contact us at 5245369 or 5245333, or visit us at our office at the DLSU-Angelo King Institute.

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Given the design of the workshop, we will only accept confirmations for a minimum of three family members per group. Registration fee is **P22,500** for three participants (or an average of **P7,500** / person). The fee covers lunches, morning and afternoon refreshments, and seminar materials.

Early Bird Offer
For confirmed reservations made not later than 22 February 2004 (Saturday), the registration fee is **P18,000** for three participants (or an average of **P6,000** / person). The fourth participant and all additional reservations from the same family (or office) get an additional discount on the registration fee. Only 40 people will be given slots for the seminar-workshop. Registration will only be confirmed upon receipt of payment.

Inquiries
For inquiries and payment details, contact the De La Salle University-Angelo King Institute for Economic and Business Studies at 5245369 and look for Sheelah Johnston or Aileen Villanueva. Or e-mail **sheelahjohnston@yahoo.com** or **villanuevaa@csb.dlsu.edu.ph**

Be part of the NextGen Network

The NextGen Network is an initiative of the Family Business Studies Center (FBSC). It is meant to provide "next-generation" family business owners / managers an opportunity to gain skills in, and acquire insights on, managing a family business. The intent is to ensure healthy and sustainable family businesses in the country.

Each NextGen Network will be composed of a minimum of ten to a maximum of 15 individuals, preferably 20 to 35 years old, who should be either currently in management / leadership positions, or preparing to move into leadership positions in the family business.

The FBSC plans to organize one whole-day session per month for 12 consecutive months, during which the participants will engage in a workshop, which will include skills-building sessions, sharing of experiences, and / or problem solving sessions under the guidance of skilled facilitators, led by FBSC Director Dr. Ginny Santiago.

Participants will be given an opportunity to determine the content of the program, depending on their collective needs.

Interested parties may contact Sheelah Johnston at 5245369, or e-mail her at **sheelahjohnston@yahoo.com.**

Early birds arrested over illegal posters

CONFISCATED campaign posters are dumped by the police who arrested and jailed 22 volunteers of the presidential candidates who had posted them along Aurora Boulevard in Cubao. JOAN BONDOC

From page A1

the supervision of the MMDA (Metro Manila Development Authority). They will work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.," Abalos said.

If charges had already been filed against them, the Comelec chief said he could still make representations before the court.

Members of the Western Police District (WPD) Special Operations Group detachment at the City Hall and the local Department of Public Services caught over 200 people putting up posters of presidential and senatorial candidates outside the more than 80 authorized areas.

No resistance

"They did not resist arrest because most of them did not know that there were designated common poster areas," said Senior Supt. Ernesto Ibay, SOG officer-in-charge. They were simply hired to do the job, he added.

Chief Insp. Gerry Agunod, WPD spokesperson, said the posters were being placed on the walls of the Light Railway Transit, schools, churches and public buildings, and right after Monday midnight, just an hour or so after the campaign period began.

Also seized in the police operations were cans of glue and boxes of campaign materials.

The illegal posters were those of President Macapagal-Arroyo and her rivals in the presidential race, actor Fernando Poe Jr. and Sen. Panfilo Lacson; vice presidential candidate Sen. Loren Legarda, and senatorial candidates Melanio "Batas" Mauricio and former Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon; and of party-list groups.

Agunod said those arrested, most of whom were paid P200 to P300 each for their efforts, were charged with vandalism and violation of the Omnibus Election Code. They were released later but they will be made to tear down the posters they put up, he added.

On Monday, Abalos informed journalists during a press briefing about the Comelec action. Earlier, he predicted that campaign posters would be put up shortly before midnight, the start of the campaign.

A convoy of media practitioners on board several vehicles followed Abalos and his party in an "inspection" that began around 11 p.m. that day.

"At first, I thought we would be disappointed because we were unable to catch anyone, although I was happy because apparently the politicians heeded our warnings," Abalos said after touring the metropolis for about two hours and seeing that no posters were being put up outside the designated areas.

QC, Marikina, Manila

But shortly after ending the trip, the Comelec chief chanced upon several men installing posters of Gordon and another senatorial candidate, former Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II, along Anonas Street, Quezon City.

The group was taken to the police station and several minutes later, Abalos and his two security escorts picked up another batch putting up posters of party-list groups, Sanlakas and Partido ng Manggagawa, near C-5.

The convoy then chanced upon another group led by a former policeman in Barangka, Marikina City while putting up posters of Poe on a wall.

In Manila, 15 persons were caught putting up posters of Lacson along Quezon Boulevard in Quiapo. Seven Macapagal supporters were arrested along Remedios Street and Taft Avenue in Malate, police said.

JOAN BONDOC

VOLUNTEERS for various candidates are behind bars in Station 7 of the Central Police District in Quezon City.

Six persons were arrested in Plaza Santa Cruz while installing posters of Poe, while five others were found placing Legarda posters along España and Blumentritt Streets.

Nine persons were arrested on Rizal Avenue and Mayhaligue Street, and along United Nations Avenue for putting up Gordon campaign materials. Along Pablo Ocampo Street, 10 Mauricio followers were arrested.

Others arrested were caught putting up posters of party list groups.

Navotas

In Navotas, Comelec personnel led by Armando Mallorca removed illegally placed posters, mostly those of Ms Macapagal and Poe. Ten public areas have been declared common poster areas in the municipality.

The posters were pasted on walls in residential areas without the consent of house owners and on electric posts, Comelec assistant Jeffrey Castillo said.

Asked about the candidates' accountability, Abalos said: "We will call their attention to these, tell them to dismantle these [posters] within three days. Otherwise, it shall be presumed that these were posted with their consent or under their direction."

Inspections continue

The inspections will be continued by members of the police, military and the MMDA, Abalos said.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday said that supporters of candidates who violated the Election Code by putting up illegal posters would go straight to jail. He said the agency had been deputized by the Comelec to remove illegal campaign materials.

"*Sa maliit nating kita, makukulong pa tayo* (For such little income, they would land in jail)," he said.

Fernando also reminded candidates to coordinate their activities, including rallies and motorcades, with the MMDA in order to avoid traffic problems.

"The candidates should inform us of their plans three days in advance," he said, adding that violators would be penalized and their vehicles towed.

He also said the candidates should provide toilet facilities, garbage bins and extra security forces for big political rallies.

With reports from Tina Santos, Tarra Quismundo, Margaux Ortiz and Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.

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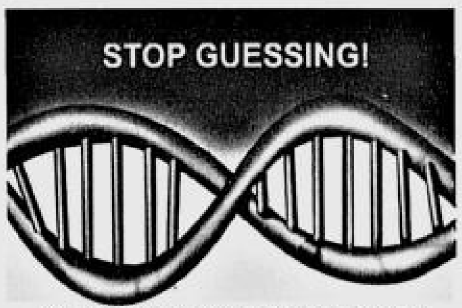

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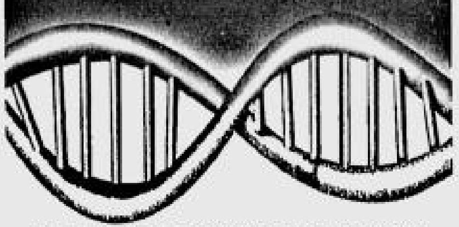

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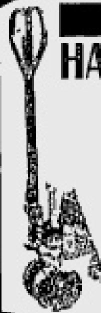

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Focus on poverty, Badawi urges Asian countries

By Isagani Yambot
Publisher

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi Tuesday urged the nations of Asia to focus their attention on eradicating poverty.

In a keynote address at the Agenda Asia conference here, Badawi said that the eradication of poverty is the gravest of four major challenges facing the region today.

"About one in every five Asians, close to 600 million people, suffer from the effects of poverty," he said. He added that hunger and famine are still common occurrences in some Asian countries.

1. Promoting human development. This involves, he said, not only raising income levels but ensuring access to good education and high literacy, adequate health services and clean water, among other things.

2. Developing good governance structures by the state, by the private sector and by civil society.

3. Ensuring regional peace and stability.

Badawi said that only eight Asian nations are deemed to have high human development by the United Nations Development Program.

"Nations pursuing economic prosperity cannot ignore their most valuable resource—their own people," he said.

Education and skills development, he said, will be the key to human and economic development. He urged Asian nations to allocate substantial resources for these purposes.

Badawi said good governance includes, among other things, efficient and responsive delivery systems; financial prudence; a government, business and society free of corruption; transparency and accountability; and business with a social conscience and not solely fixated on profit-making.

He lamented that many Asian countries are still vulnerable to ethnic and religious tensions, autonomy and separatist pressures, militancy and terrorism.

He urged Asian nations to work toward building trust and confidence, "focusing on the future rather than dwelling on the past" and "extending the hand of amity and rejecting the specter of enmity."

The best hope for Asia, he said, lies in a two-pronged approach:

1. Addressing the root causes of tensions and conflicts at home and between states.

2. Strengthening the regional and global architecture for peace and security that is founded on respect for international law and norms and cooperative security.

The Agenda Asia conference is being held under the auspices of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Asia News Network, a news-sharing group of 14 national daily newspaper published in Asia cities.

Compensation bill's flaws not Etta's fault, says claimants' lawyer

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

A LAWYER of Claimants 1081, a group of martial law victims, said they're not blaming Rep. Etta Rosales for passing a compensation bill riddled with loopholes.

The Akbayan party-list representative was the principal author of House Bill 4535 that was passed on Feb. 4.

Lawyer Rod Domingo said Rosales assured him the loopholes can be corrected later when the House version is reconciled with the Senate bill at the bicameral conference.

Because of the staunch opposition of pro-Marcos legislators, it was more important to pass the bill before Congress adjourned on Feb. 6. "Etta allowed (the loopholes) so the bill can be approved," Domingo said.

The Senate failed to pass Senate Bill 1877 in time. Authors of the file will have refile the same bill in the next congress. HB 4535 would have set aside P8 billion out of the $684 million recovered Marcos ill-gotten wealth to compensate martial law victims. SB 1877, on the other hand, would have earmarked $200 million.

Aside from victims of torture, HB 4535 sought to compensate those who suffered from illegal detention, summary execution, involuntary disappearance, illegal takeover of business and saturation drives. The bill recognized abducted children of rebels, detainees who were sexually abused, as well as victims of "involuntary exile" from Jan. 1, 1969 to Feb. 25, 1986, the day Marcos was ousted.

Domingo and Selda, another victims group, have denounced the loopholes in HB 4535. He said the bill "opened the floodgates to fraudulent claims."

"Even Imelda (Marcos) is claiming they were victims of human rights abuse because they were forced out and made to live in exile (in Hawaii). Under the bill, even the Marcoses can file a claim. In fact all his cronies like (the late Gen. Fabian) Ver who were exiled can make a claim," Domingo said.

The evaluation alone of the hundreds of thousands of claims "would take a lifetime." Domingo would have wanted to limit the list of claimants to the 9,539 victims who won a $2 billion class suit against Marcos in a Hawaii court.

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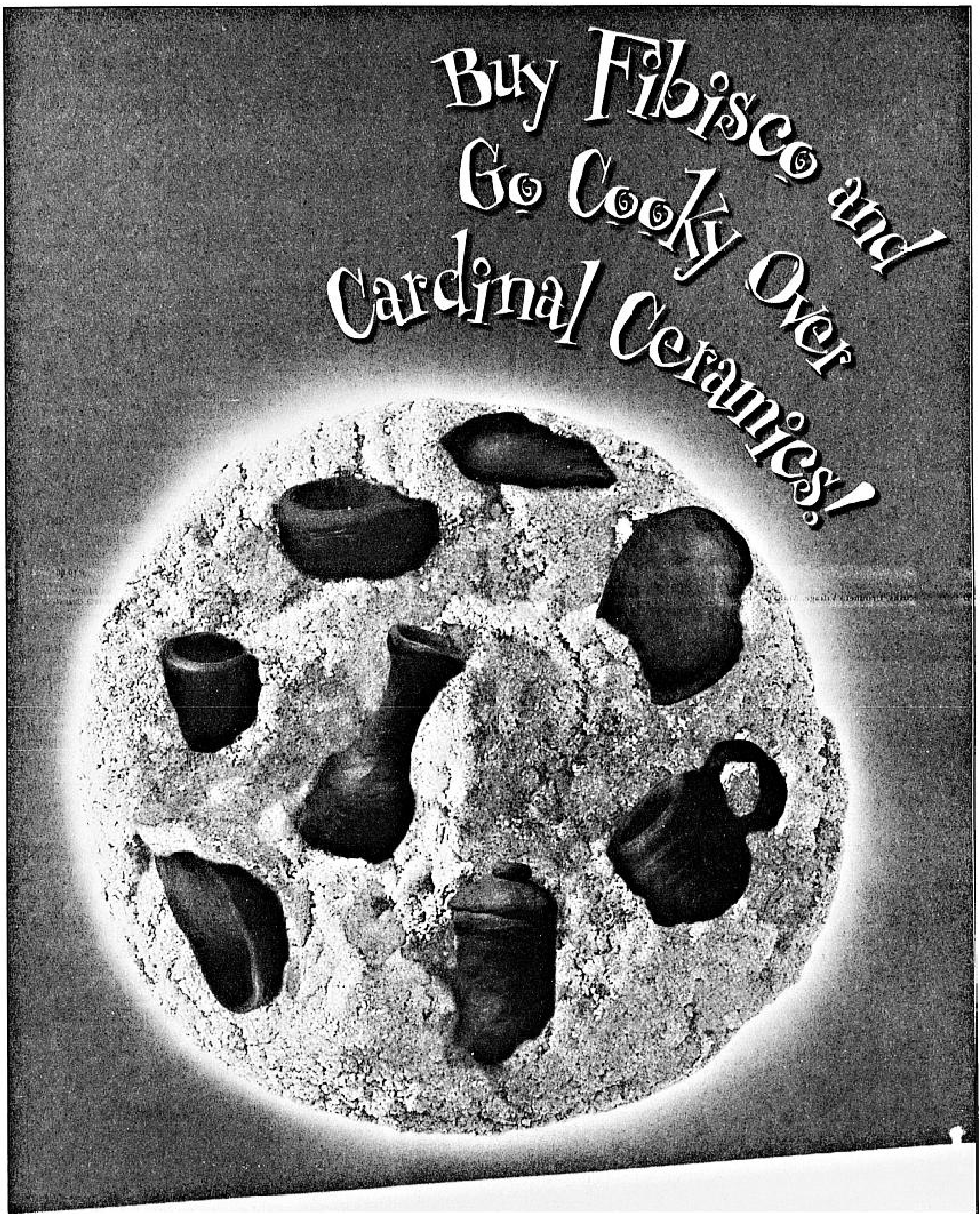

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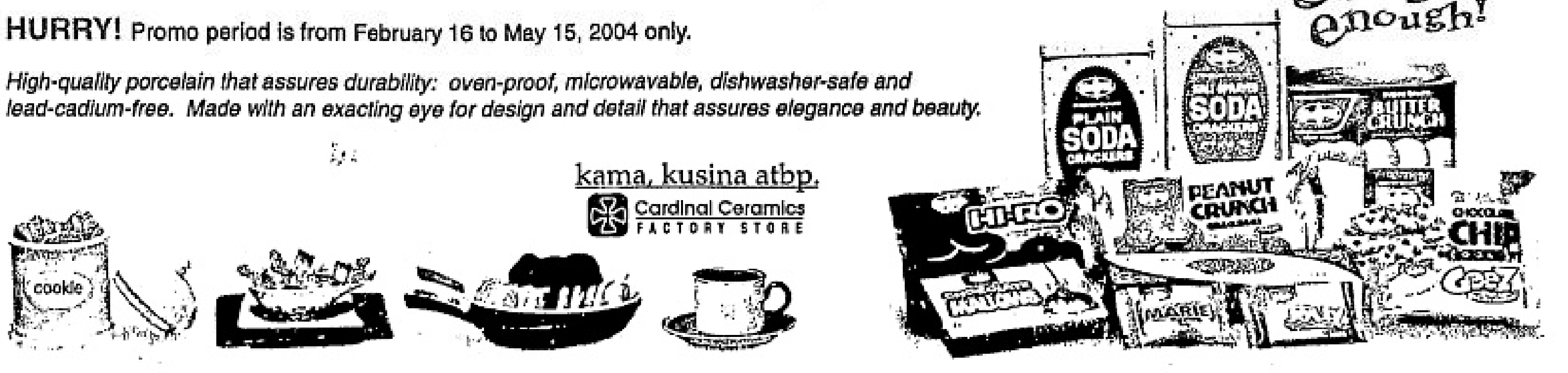

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Erap shadow looms large at FPJ rally

By Carlito Pablo

THE SHADOW of deposed President Joseph Estrada and the ghosts of Edsa II loomed large yesterday at the official kickoff rally of his pal Fernando Poe Jr.

Going by the statements of three of Poe's senatorial candidates—former Sen. Francisco Tatad, Estrada's son Jinggoy and Rep. Didagen Dilangalen (Maguindanao)—the presidential election will boil down to a judgment by the people of the legitimacy of the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, the principal beneficiary of the Edsa II revolt that kicked Estrada out of office.

Tatad, who was among the pro-Estrada senator-judges during the actor's aborted impeachment trial, told some 15,000 people at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City that Edsa II was essentially a "crime."

"It is a continuing and unpunished crime," Tatad said. "We must now end the illegal occupation (of Malacañang)."

To the crowd's delight, Tatad described Ms Macapagal as an "*akyat bahay*" (house thief), who not only entered a dwelling but also caused the "imprisonment of the father of the house." He was referring to Estrada.

Jinggoy, a co-accused in Estrada's ongoing trial, said he was held in prison for two years with his father for a crime they both were innocent of.

"I don't know why," the younger Estrada said in Filipino as his mother Sen. Luisa Ejercito watched from the audience. "We have not done anything wrong against the people." The father and son are facing plunder and graft charges.

'Victory of masses'

Jinggoy called on the audience to extend him the support it had given to his father, saying: "The victory of FPJ is also a victory of the masses."

Dilangalen, who initiated a failed impeachment case against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and other Supreme Court justices who approved the oath-taking as new President of then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in January 2001, said he was running for senator because he "cannot leave Erap (Estrada)."

Flattering words

"Let's kick out this illegitimate government," Dilangalen declared, adding that Ms Macapagal should not be allowed to have another six years in office.

"The ouster of Erap was wrong," he said.

Poe's vice presidential candidate Sen. Loren Legarda had flattering words for both Tatad and Jinggoy.

When it was her turn to introduce the 12 senatorial candidates of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, Legarda, who was closely identified with the Edsa II forces, said that Jinggoy was "loved by me and the masses."

As for Tatad, who wrote two books questioning the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration, Legarda described him as a "senator of conviction."

Don't revive Edsa II issue

Former Sen. Leticia Ramos-Shahani, who, like her brother former President Fidel V. Ramos, was involved in the Edsa II revolt said she hoped that Tatad, Jinggoy and Dilangalen would not make the Estrada ouster a major campaign issue.

"It's time for us to move forward," said Shahani, who resigned as an adviser to Ms Macapagal to join the Poe camp.

Shahani said reviving questions about Edsa II would go against the grain of Poe's central message, which is "unity for the entire country."

Two other senatorial candidates of Poe—reelectionist Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile—who also sat as senator-judges in the Estrada impeachment trial, didn't dwell on the Edsa II issue during their allotted three-minute speech.

Wanted: President . . .

From page A1

tions yesterday hurled a bold challenge to six presidential contenders: Undergo a job interview to determine if they are qualified for the highest post of the land.

The Personnel Management Association of the Philippines said the results of the interview would give voters a competency profile of each candidate and help them make an intelligent choice in the May 10 presidential election.

"Selecting a president is no different from selecting a chief executive officer ... The absence of ability results only in disappointment," PMAP executive director Gerry Plana said in a press conference as the 90-day presidential campaign kicked off.

The PMAP has given out invitations to President Macapagal-Arroyo, actor Fernando Poe Jr., former Sen. Raul Roco, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, evangelist Eddie Villanueva and businessman Eddie Gil. Only Roco, however, has so far agreed to be interviewed.

"We dare GMA, Roco, Bro. Eddie, Lacson and Eddie Gil to face the Filipino people by facing their personnel managers," former PMAP president Barbie Atienza said.

Under the proposal, a five-person panel made up of academicians and human resource experts chosen by the PMAP will interview each of the six candidates, measure each of their levels of competency and come up with their individual profiles based on five competencies.

The five competencies and their definitions are:

- Navigator/strategist (captain of the ship). Steers the ship of state to arrive at the "destination" of a just and humane society.
- Mobilizer. Leads the executive department; and proactively builds alliances and consensus with concerned sectors to achieve complex objectives.
- Servant leader. Serves the people with a genuinely caring heart; works hard and well to achieve the goals of government.
- Captivator. Inspires unity, trust and optimism among the people; moves people away from cynicism.
- Guardian of national wealth and patrimony. Ensures the long-term health and prosperity of the national and people through principled action and the rule of law.

Based on interviews

Grace Abella-Zata, PMAP vice president and head of the presidential profiling committee, said the five competencies constituting the "Success Profile of the Philippine President" were based on interviews with the country's former presidents, members of Congress and the Cabinet, the Chief Justice, political analysts and media personalities.

From the success profile, the PMAP also agreed on a methodology to measure the competencies of each of the candidates. PMAP officers said they would explain the methodology only after the interviews have been completed by the end of March.

Non-partisan

Plana said the PMAP would maintain its non-partisan stance and refrain from endorsing any candidate. The results of the interviews and the competency profiles of the candidates, however, would be published and circulated in factories, barangays and other mass-based organizations.

PMP president Oscar Contreras said the competency profiles of the candidates would give voters an idea on who among them "have a greater chance of success when elected."

Asked if the interviewers could be intimidated by the presidential candidates, Contreras said: "We will not have that deference to any authority."

To the six presidential candidates, Contreras said: "We will be waiting for you to contact us. We challenge you to make this elections more than a popularity contest."

Robbers couldn't rob bank, rob exec's home

From page A1

da with her husband Luis around 7 p.m. on Monday when they were blocked by 10 robbers armed with handguns and M-16 rifles.

The couple was driving along Daffodil Street inside Saint Jude Subdivision in Malinta, Valenzuela City, when they were stopped by the robbers on board a Ford Everest with Plate No. 8—a license plate issued only to members of the House of Representatives.

This had allowed the suspects to move from one city to another without being noticed by policemen patrolling the area.

Three of the suspects got off the vehicle, aimed their guns at the couple and dragged Luis to the other vehicle. They later commandeered the bank manager's Honda Civic and motored back to Malabon City, while the other vehicle followed.

Inside the bank, the robbers forced Lopez to open the vault, but quickly abandoned the plan after the bank manager failed to complete the combination.

They instead proceeded to her house in Arbour Town subdivision in Valenzuela City, police chief Jose Marcelo told the INQUIRER yesterday.

When they reached the Lopez residence, the robbers locked the couple and their four kids inside the bathroom. They took some cash and several pieces of jewelry worth P115,000 and fled on board the Ford Everest.

Marcelo said the police had already identified possible suspects.

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LOCAL boy who made it good, Lacson, is lionized by his provincemates in Cavite.

JESS YUSON

Ping opens campaign in Cavite blasting K-4

From page A1

Clad in a red-and-green checkered shirt, Lacson waved from the sunroof of a white SUV, part of the motorcade that started at the President Diosdado Macapagal Avenue in Pasay City.

"The construction of the Macapagal Avenue is the father of all scams under the Macapagal administration. It is the most expensive boulevard in the universe," said Lacson, who is running under his own faction of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino,

"We didn't do it on purpose but somehow there is some symbolism. We started from the foul and reeking avenue to the fresh air of our province," Lacson said when he addressed and had lunch with common folk in Naic town at 2:30, some eight hours after the motorcade that consisted of a thousand vehicles.

What the country needs is a strong leader against corrupt government officials and criminal elements, according to the senator.

Unlike other presidential candidates, Lacson said his program on law and order and on corruption were based on track record and not on empty promises.

"When I was the Philippine National Police chief, mulcting cops became a thing of the past, kidnappings became a rarity and our countrymen felt safe in and outside of their homes because of our relentless campaign against criminality," he said.

Second Caviteño president

Lacson, a native of Imus, told a crowd of predominantly rural poor in Bulihan town that the time for another president from Cavite had come. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, a Caviteño and head of a faction of the Katipunan, which launched the Philippine Revolution, became the president of the first Philippine Republic in 1898.

"The Caviteno, when he gets into a fight, does it all the way. When he is placed on the spot, he doesn't turn back. When he falls in love, he can't be stopped," Lacson said before the cheering crowd of around 500 in Barangay Paliparan's small community plaza.

Favorite son

Lacson spent the whole day motoring through Cavite and making stops at select cities and municipalities to address crowds holding "Anak ng Cavite" banners in obvious reference to the senator who has become the province's favorite son.

His province mates along the route of the motorcade also waved red flags and homemade posters.

"Like a warrior who is coming home to his roots for blessings, Senator Lacson comes back to Cavite. Let's give him not only our blessings but all our support as well," Cavite Gov. Ayong Maliksi said.

With the support of Maliksi and of former Cavite Gov. Juanito Remulla, Lacson's victory in the province is almost certain.

"Caviteños were among the first to raise arms against the foreign yoke in the 19th century. It's now time for another Caviteño to save the country from the clutches of poverty," Maliksi said.

Maliksi and his red-clad followers welcomed the Lacson motorcade when it entered Cavite in Bacoor town.

Remulla clan

The candidate was joined in the motorcade by Nueva Ecija Rep. Carlos Padilla, Makati Rep. Agapito Aquino, San Juan Rep. Ronnie Zamora, Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico, Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla and Vice Gov. Juanito Victor Remulla.

"The country needs a strong leader like Senator Lacson. If one takes care of peace and order, everything else will follow," said the vice governor.

The track record of the Remulla clan in delivering votes to its candidates is almost unparalleled. "Lacson can get at least 100,000 more than his closest rival in this province," the vice governor said.

The family delivered the needed votes for Joseph Estrada in 1998 and Ramon Mitra in 1992. Mitra got the most number of votes in Cavite but lost the presidential race.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Rebel uprising spreads in Haiti; death toll reaches 42

ST. MARC, Haiti—At least 42 people were killed as rebels in nearly a dozen towns rampaged, prompting fears of a plot to oust embattled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

After sporadic gun battles Monday, police regained control of the important port city of St. Marc, 72 km west of Port-au-Prince. At least two men were shot and another was allegedly shot and killed by Aristide supporters. His body was left on a roadside.

"The national police force alone cannot reestablish order," Prime Minister Yvon Neptune told The Associated Press in St. Marc on the first visit to any of the affected towns by a senior government official.

"The violence is tied to a coup d'etat," he said the day before.

In Port-au-Prince, the capital, coalition opposition political parties met to discuss whether they should join the rebels. By late Monday, they had distanced themselves from the uprising.

"We do not recognize ourselves in the armed insurrection but in the peaceful struggle of the people for democracy," said Mischa Gaillard, an opposition politician who met with others in the Democratic Platform late Monday. "We deplore violence."

The uprising, which began Thursday in Haiti's fourth-largest city of Gonaives, signals a dangerous turning point in Haiti's three-year political crisis. A similar revolt in 1985 also began in Gonaives and led to the ouster the following year of the 29-year Duvalier family dictatorship.

"We are in a situation of armed popular insurrection," said opposition politician Himler Rebu, who led a failed coup against Lt. Gen. Prosper Avril in 1989.

Tension has mounted since Aristide's party won flawed legislative elections in 2000 and international donors blocked millions of dollars in aid. Misery has also deepened with most of the nation's 8 million people living without jobs and on less than $1 a day despite election promises from Aristide, a former priest who had vowed to bring dignity to the poor.

With no army and fewer than 5,000 poorly armed police, the government is ill-equipped to halt the revolt. Police stations have been a major target because they symbolize Aristide's authority and officers are accused of siding with government supporters. *AP*

WHO warns of more human bird flu cases

HANOI—The World Health Organization warned Tuesday that more Asian countries are likely to suffer human cases of bird flu, while monks in Thailand prayed for millions of chickens slaughtered in the outbreak and dignitaries in China munched poultry meat to say it's still safe to eat.

The disease has jumped to people in two countries so far—killing 14 in Vietnam and five in Thailand in cases mostly traced to contact with sick poultry—and has prompted culls in Asia of more than 50 million chicken and other fowl in a disaster for the poultry industry.

"It can be anticipated that human cases will also be detected in other countries where outbreaks in poultry are spreading," WHO said in a statement posted on its website.

Governments around the world have slapped import bans on poultry from countries struck by bird flu, and although health experts agree with most restrictions—especially on the transport of live birds—they say that eating properly cooked chicken meat and eggs poses no danger.

Stripped of exports markets and faced with wary consumers at home, some Asian governments are pushing hard to promote chicken domestically.

In China, front pages of state-controlled newspapers were brimming Tuesday with photos of the agriculture minister and officials tucking in to chicken dinners as their dining companions gnawed on roasted fowl and grinned for the cameras.

"Agriculture chief eats chicken to reassure the people," the New Capital Times said.

China's official chicken binge came days after Thailand's government staged a free feast of some 60 tons of chicken.

Government-ordered culls in Thailand have killed more than 26 million chicken, and officials there organized a Buddhist ceremony Tuesday at the Agriculture Ministry to bless the souls of the dead birds. More than 100 Buddhist monks in yellow robes chanted the blessings.

The mass slaughter violates Buddhist principles, and the ceremony was aimed at easing public guilt over killing the birds, government spokesperson Prompol Sod-Eiam said.

"We feel guilty because we are Buddhist," he said. "(The ceremony) can make us feel relaxed and apologize to the souls of the dead chickens."

The ceremony also was an opportunity to promote poultry dishes: Officials served the monks chicken curry.

Seven other Asian governments also have reported bird flu oubreaks—Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Pakistan, South Korea and Taiwan. The United States last week confirmed an outbreak in the state of Delaware.

However, in Pakistan, Taiwan and the United States, the bird flu strain is milder than the H5N1 virus that has jumped to humans in Vietnam and Thailand. *AP*

10 patients in HK tested for SARS

HONG KONG—Ten patients from the same hospital ward have been isolated and are being tested for SARS and flu after developing fevers, and two showed pneumonia symptoms, Hong Kong health officials said Tuesday.

The Prince of Wales Hospital sealed off the ward—the site of a SARS outbreak last year—after the patients were detected with fever Monday morning, the Hospital Authority said in a statement.

Hospital workers who cared for the patients have not shown signs of fever or pneumonia, the statement said.

Hospital spokesperson Cecilia Lok said Tuesday two of the patients have pneumonia symptoms—which can be present in SARS patients—and that test results for all 10 people would be available either Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday morning.

Hong Kong is on alert for the possible re-emergence of severe acute respiratory syndrome after the disease spread here from mainland China last year and killed 299. A total of 1,755 were infected. *AP*

A MAN rides his bike through a street barricade in Gonaives, Haiti's fourth largest city, from which rebels launched their uprising against President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, leaving at least 42 people dead. AP

2 Filipinos die in UAE plane crash

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates—An Iranian plane crashed Tuesday near an upscale neighborhood as the Kish Air Fokker 50 prepared to land at Sharjah airport in the United Arab Emirates, killing 43 people aboard, including two Filipinos, Emirates officials said. Three survivors were being treated at a local hospital.

Local television reports showed flaming, smoking wreckage and rescue helicopters landing near the scene. A row of bodies covered in red blankets was visible in the footage, and frantic-looking rescue workers in white robes were seen pushing at the plane's debris, searching for survivors.

The Kish Air Fokker 50 crashed at 11:40 a.m. (0740 GMT) in an open area about 3 km from the airport, said Ghanem al-Hajiry, director general of civil aviation and the Sharjah Airport Authority. The cause of the crash was not yet known, he said.

Al-Hajiry said there were no casualties on the ground.

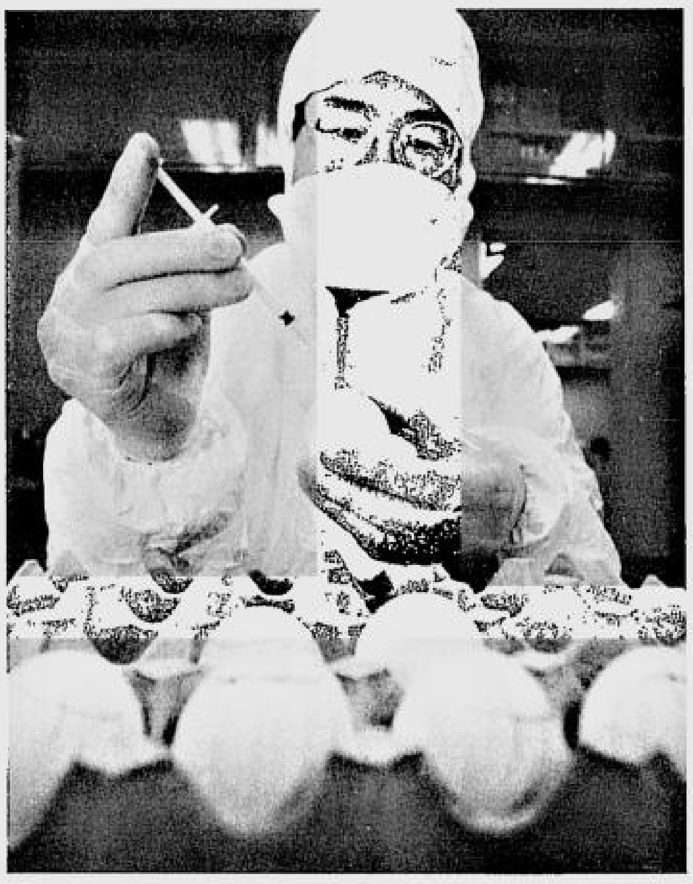
Col. Saleh Ali al-Mutawaa, general director of Sharjah Police, said 43 of the 46 people aboard the plane had died: 12 Indians, 19 Iranian, four Egyptians, two Filipinos, two Algerians, one Syrian, one Chinese, one Nigerian and a Bangladeshi.

Three crash victims were receiving treatment at al-Qasimi hospital in Sharjah, an emergency room attendant at the hospital confirmed to The Associated Press.

Two of them were in critical condition, he said. The attendant did not provide a condition on the third, who was reported as stable by the Emirates' official news agency, WAM. Al-Mutawaa said two of the victims at al-Qasimi hospital were Filipinos, and the third was an Iranian.

No other information about the survivors was immediately available. WAM reported that two other people believed to have been taken alive from the scene had died on arrival or later at local hospitals.

Witnesses reported seeing about 30 bodies pulled from the wreckage and laid out beneath blankets at the scene. More bodies were seen being taken away in ambulances from the crash scene, which witnesses said was on a road near an upper-class residential neighborhood. *AP*



A LABORATORY researcher demonstrates a detection test for bird flu at the National Institute of Animal Health's department of infectious diseases in Tsukuba city, north of Tokyo, on Wednesday. A Vietnamese man died of bird flu on Monday, taking Asia's death toll to 19. REUTERS

North Korea denies getting nuke tech from Pakistan

SEOUL—North Korea on Tuesday denied receiving nuclear weapons technology from Pakistan, and accused the United States of spreading false rumors ahead of crucial six-nation talks on ending the communist state's nuclear ambitions.

"This is nothing but a mean and groundless propaganda," a spokesperson of the North Korean Foreign Ministry told Pyongyang's official news agency, KCNA.

The North Korea spokesperson said the "US smear campaign would only provide the DPRK with an opportunity to realize once again what a just measure it took to build nuclear deterrent force."

DPRK stands for Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's official name.

Abdul Qadeer Khan, the founder of Pakistan's nuclear program, was forgiven by Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf last Thursday after admitting that he had spread nuclear secrets to Iran, Libya and North Korea through an international black market.

The United States, the two Koreas, China, Japan and Russia are set to begin six-nation talks on Feb. 25 on ending North Korea's nuclear weapons programs.

North Korea runs a nuclear weapons program using plutonium.

The United States also believes that North Korea has a separate program based on enriched uranium, possibly using technology imported from Pakistan. North Korea has denied the allegation.

"The United States is now hyping the story about the 'transfer of nuclear technology' to the DPRK by a Pakistani scientist in a bid to make the DPRK's 'enriched uranium program' sound plausible," the North Korean spokesperson said. "This is aimed to ... scuttle the projected six-way talks for the present." *AP*

Kerry eyes wins in Virginia, Tennessee

WASHINGTON—Democratic front-runner John Kerry hopes to build on his commanding lead in the party's presidential race on Tuesday with wins in the Virginia and Tennessee primaries.

Kerry, a four-term Massachusetts senator, swept three Democratic nominating contests over the weekend and has won 10 of 12 states in his drive for the right to challenge President George W. Bush in November.

Wins in Virginia and Tennessee would give Kerry his first victories in the South and help dispel doubts about whether a Massachusetts liberal can compete in the traditionally more conservative region, which could be critical in a November matchup with Bush.

A Kerry sweep also could knock out of the race one of his two Southern rivals, retired Gen. Wesley Clark of Arkansas and Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina, who are looking to spring upsets or at least score second-place finishes that will propel them on to the Wisconsin primary on Feb. 17.

Both Clark and Edwards promise to roll on to Wisconsin no matter what happens on Tuesday, but Clark in particular could be endangered by a third-place finish in Tennessee, where he has focused his campaign.

Former front-runner Howard Dean already has looked past the two Southern states to concentrate on Wisconsin, where he had promised to make a last stand against Kerry. On Monday, the former Vermont governor said he would stay in the race past Wisconsin, win or lose.

"I can't quit on all the people who are depending on me to raise the issues that we have raised," said Dean, who has waged an outsider campaign based on opposition to the war in Iraq and Washington-based special interests.

A total of 151 delegates to July's nominating convention are at stake in Tennessee and Virginia, where Kerry leads in opinion polls. A Reuters/MSNBC/Zogby poll on Monday showed Kerry with a huge lead over Edwards in Tennessee.

Edwards and Clark skipped the weekend's contests in Michigan, Washington and Maine, all won by Kerry, to concentrate on Tennessee and Virginia after beating Kerry last week in South Carolina and Oklahoma, respectively.

Those are Kerry's only two losses on his drive to the nomination, and he has started looking ahead on the campaign trail to the fight with Bush.

He ignores his rivals and has concentrated his attacks on the president's economic leadership, his ties to special interests and his shifting justification for going to war in Iraq.

Kerry on Monday ridiculed a new White House report predicting the creation of 2.6 million jobs this year.

"I've got a feeling this report was prepared by the same people who brought us the intelligence on Iraq," Kerry told a crowd in Roanoke, Virginia, noting the US economy had lost more than 2 million jobs under Bush.

Kerry's rivals still hope something will derail his nonstop momentum and give them a chance. Even after the Wisconsin primary, which could amount to a final showdown with Kerry for all of his remaining rivals, about 75 percent of the 4,322 delegates will remain to be chosen.

That could leave the door open for an opponent who survives Wisconsin to make a final charge against Kerry heading into March 2 primaries in big states like California, New York and Ohio. *Reuters*

Mars rovers search for signs of water

LOS ANGELES—Two Mars rovers spent the weekend prospecting for signs of water in what Nasa scientists described on Monday as the mission's most important experiments so far in the quest for evidence of life on the Red Planet.

The rover Spirit finished a thorough examination of its first martian rock, nicknamed Adirondack, and began driving—for the first time using its auto-pilot—toward its next target, a rock nicknamed White Boat.

On the other side of the planet, the rover Opportunity used its microscopic cameras and onboard spectrometers to zoom in on an outcropping of bedrock whose composition has tantalized scientists since the rover landed nearby on Jan. 24.

"We had a big weekend—probably the biggest weekend two or three days for science since we landed," lead investigator Steve Squyres told reporters on Monday.

Data returned by Opportunity suggests that the tan-colored rocks that comprise the outcropping consist of a fine, sand-like matrix embedded with spherical grains of a different material, "like blueberries in a muffin," Squyres said.

Scientists at Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, believe the outcropping, nicknamed "Opportunity Ledge" was formed by compacted layers of volcanic ash or wind-blown dust.

The "blueberries," or spherols, could be molten volcanic material that sprayed into the air and froze as it fell, or water-related formations called "concretions," Squyres said.

"Concretions form when fluids, usually water, carrying dissolved stuff diffuses through a rock and ... it grows these little spherical granules within the rock," Squyres said.

Spectrometer readings of the outcrop showed an abundance of sulfur, Squyres said. "That's a clue, too," he said. "We don't know what it means. We're still working on it but we are piecing it together bit by bit."

Scientists plan to thoroughly survey the outcrop for the next several sols, or martian days. Opportunity will work its way across the face of the outcrop, which is embedded in the side of the crater where it landed, he said.

"Then we'll find a couple of the best places and hit 'em with everything we've got," Squyres said.

Nasa navigators completed an analysis of Opportunity's descent and landing on the vast, flat Meridiani Planum, and pinpointed the rover's location inside the small crater near the planet's equator. *Reuters*

US uncovers al-Qaida plot to foment civil war in Iraq

BAGHDAD—The United States said an al-Qaida operative was plotting to provoke a civil war in Iraq as UN Secretary General Kofi Annan expressed concern over divisions among Iraqis on a plan to assume power.

US officials in Baghdad said US forces had seized a computer disc that contained a letter outlining the plan written by Abu Musab Zarqawi, who Washington suspects of links to Ansar al-Islam—a Muslim militant group operating in Iraq.

"There is clearly a plan on the part of outsiders to come into this country and spark civil war, breed sectarian violence and try to expose fissures in the society," Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, the top US military spokesperson in Iraq, said.

"We believe the document is credible and we take the threat seriously." Dan Senor, chief spokesperson for Iraq's US governor Paul Bremer, said the 17-page letter proposed attacks on the shrines and leadership of Iraq's Shiite Muslim majority, whom Arab Sunnis and Kurds fear could dominate a future government.

"The document... talks about a strategy of provoking violence targeted at the Shia, the Shia leaders in the hope that it would provoke reprisals against other ethnic groups in the country," he said.

In Washington, Secretary of State Colin Powell said the letter al-Qaida was under pressure, but had not given up.

"With respect to the letter itself, it's very revealing. They describe the weaknesses they have in their efforts to undercut the coalition's effort," Powell said.

"But at the same time, it shows they haven't given up. They're trying to get more terrorists into Iraq... But they will not succeed."

Iraq's US occupiers have long said they suspect al-Qaida has played a role in the insurgency against US troops and particularly in attacks on civilian targets in Iraq.

In October, Washington offered a reward of up to $5 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction of Zarqawi.

He is also suspected of orchestrating the murder of US diplomat Laurence Foley in the Jordanian capital in 2002.

Zarqawi was sentenced to death in absentia by a Jordanian court last year for plotting attacks against US and Israeli targets.

In New York, Annan spoke to UN Security Council members about the electoral team he sent to Baghdad on Saturday to see whether elections could be held quickly, as Shiites want, or recommend alternatives for selecting Iraqi leaders before the United States relinquishes power on June 30. *Reuters*

OPEC'S representatives Energy Ministers (from left) Chakib Khelil of Algeria, Saif Al -Nasseri of UAE, Abdullah Al-Attiya of Qatar, Nigeria's representative Edmund Daokuru and Opec's president Purnomo Yusgiantoro of Indonesia join hands at Algiers airport's VIP lounge. The Opec's ministerial meeting will start in Algiers on Tuesday. REUTERS

Opec seen to hold off oil production cuts

ALGIERS—Opec countries looked set to postpone cutting back their oil production target despite fears of a seasonal dip in demand for crude as their representatives prepared to meet here Tuesday.

Most of the delegates said Monday upon arriving in the Algerian capital that Opec members should stop producing above their agreed quotas, rather than reduce the quotas themselves.

When the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries last met in December, several oil ministers predicted making cuts at this meeting to prevent oil prices from falling as a result of warmer weather and a reduced demand for fuel.

Since then, however, a recovering US economy and vigorous growth in China have boosted demand more than many had anticipated.

Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zangeneh argued that Opec needed to strike a delicate balance in steering a course through the April-June quarter.

"In this situation we should be very careful about the market. We have both high prices and oversupply," Zangeneh said. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Iraq's No. 48 most wanted arrested

BAGHDAD—American forces in Iraq detained one of the remaining most-wanted of Saddam Hussein's regime. Muhsin Khadr, a former Baath party chair who was number 48 in the US military's Iraqi most-wanted "deck of cards," was turned over to US forces at the weekend. His arrest, leaving at large just 12 people from the card deck, of which Saddam was the ace of spades, came as the US army placed new bounties on the heads of suspected insurgent leaders. *AFP*

Russia launches military exercise

MOSCOW—Russia on Tuesday opened a strategic military exercise involving nuclear and conventional forces that was aimed at maximizing the armed forces' mobility, backed up by nuclear deterrence, Russian news agencies reported. The exercise was to include the launch of strategic sea- and ground-based missiles, the Interfax news agency reported, citing Col. Gen. Yuri Baluyevsky, the first deputy chief of the General Staff of the Russian armed forces. Baluyevsky told reporters that the strategic headquarters training exercise was being conducted "taking into account the changes of military and other threats in the world," Interfax said. *AP*

Court stays California execution

SAN FRANCISCO—Only hours before the scheduled execution of an inmate whose plight has generated celebrity support, a federal appeals court stayed the death sentence until evidence in the case can be tested for DNA. The decision Monday by an 11-judge panel of the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals came less than eight hours before Kevin Cooper was to be executed. The US Supreme Court later unanimously declined to overrule the court's stay. Cooper was convicted in the hacking deaths of four people in 1983. He claims a trio of murderers committed the attacks and says DNA tests on hair and a bloody shirt found at the murder scene will exonerate him. *AP*

Suicide bomber blows himself up in Iraq

BAGHDAD—A man wearing a belt of explosives blew himself up outside the home of two prominent tribal leaders who have cooperated with the Americans. Three guards were seriously injured. In the north, two US soldiers were killed while disposing explosives, the US military said Monday. The suicide attack occurred Monday outside the residential compound where the brothers Majid and Amer Ali Suleiman live in Ramadi, northwest of Baghdad. The brothers are two of the city's most prominent tribal leaders to cooperate with US authorities. Witnesses said the brothers were receiving callers when a man who approached the compound was told by guards to leave. He returned moments later and triggered the explosives, the witnesses said. *AP*

US, China begin highest-level military talks

BEIJING—US and Chinese officials opened a round of high-level defense consultations Tuesday, adding to recovering military ties. Washington regards military ties with Beijing as a key part of their relations. But contacts were cut off following the collision of a US Navy surveillance plane with a Chinese fighter jet three years ago, and are recuperating slowly. Delegations to the consultations were led by Douglas Feith, a US undersecretary of defense, and Xiong Guangkai, deputy chief of general staff of the People's Liberation Army. China's official Xinhua News Agency announced the start of the talks, but the two sides didn't immediately release any details of the agenda. *AP*

China appeals for food aid to N. Korea

UNITED NATIONS—China's UN ambassador on Monday urged the world community not to let the food crisis in North Korea be overshadowed by concern over the international showdown on Pyongyang's nuclear program. The remarks of Wang Guangya, president of the UN Security Council, came as the World Food Program made a last-ditch appeal for help to feed millions starving in North Korea, saying cereal stocks are virtually exhausted. "Of course there are a lot of concerns about this nuclear issue but at the same time the humanitarian issue is always an issue in North Korea," he told reporters at the UN headquarters in New York. "I hope while the different parties are working on a political solution to the North Korean nuclear issue, the international community should also pay attention to the humanitarian crisis in North Korea and try to be helpful." *AFP*

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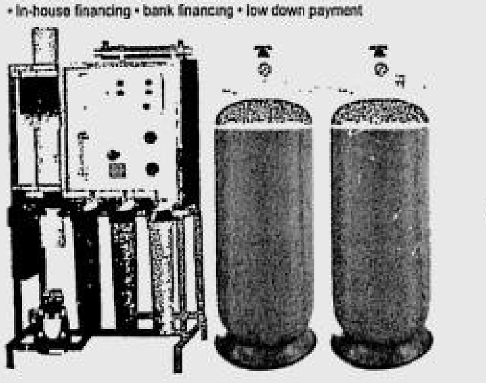

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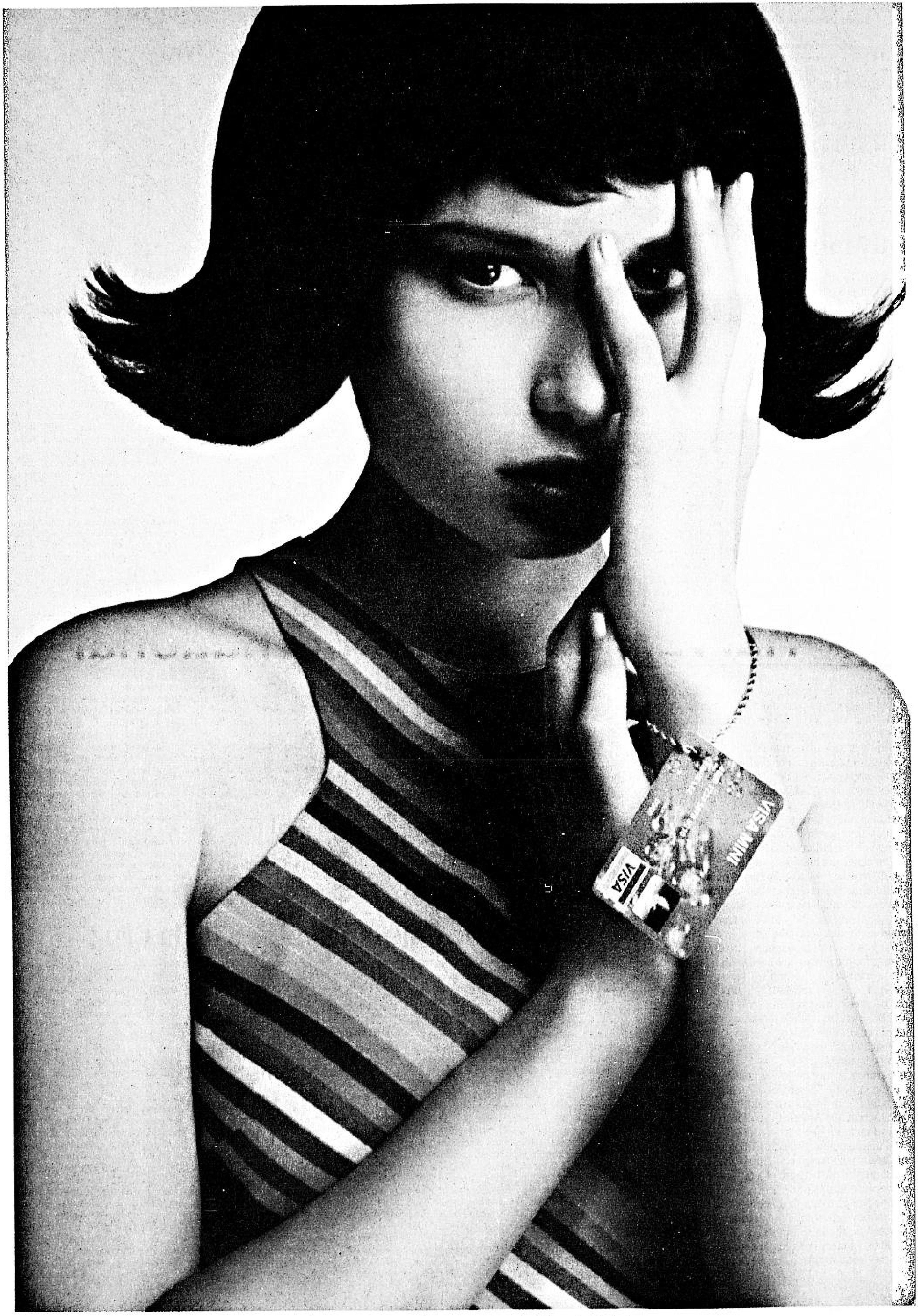
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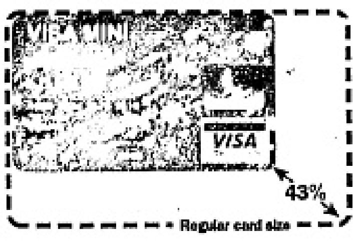
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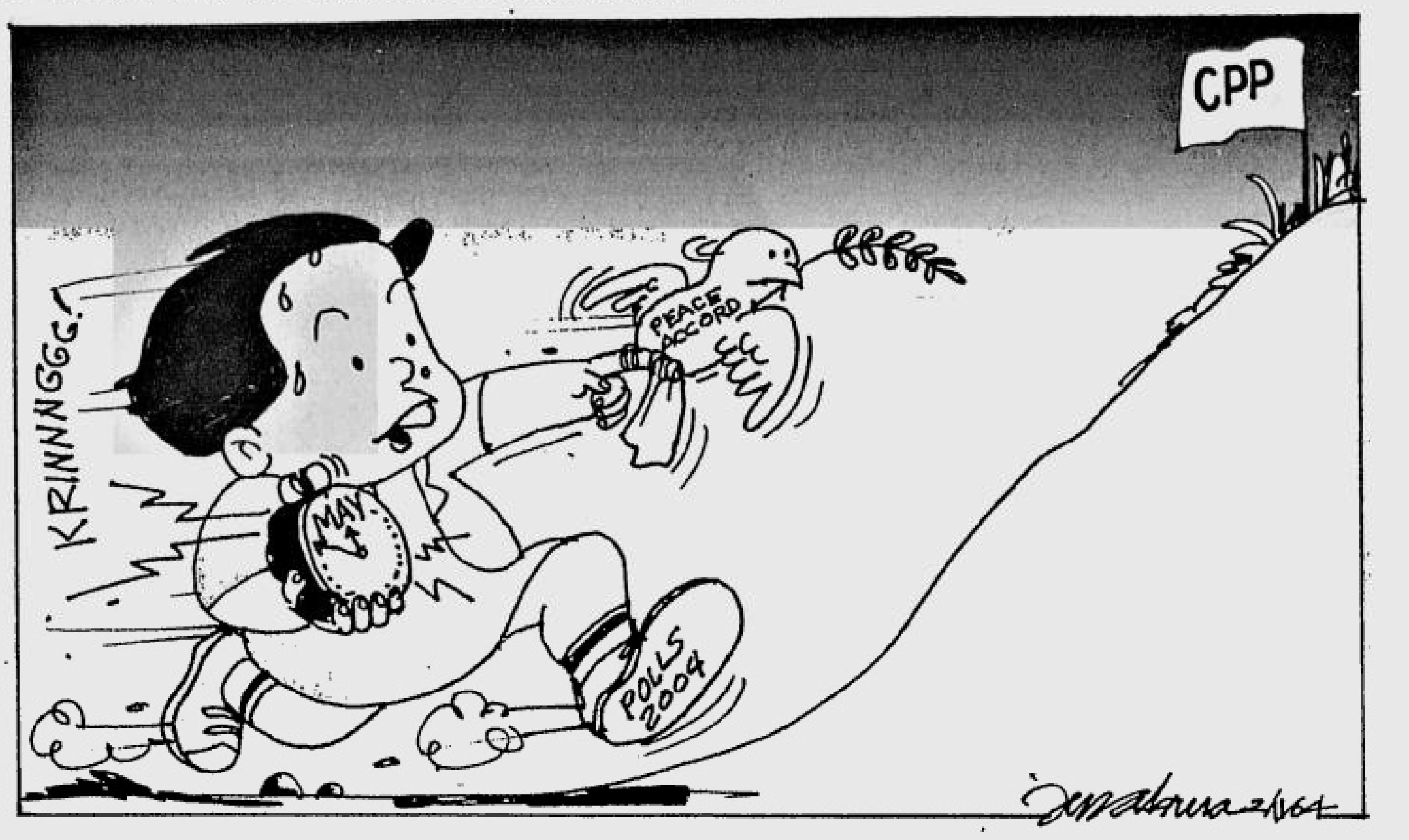

Costly mistake

EDITORIAL

IN PLEADING the case for war against Iraq, US President George W. Bush anchored his argument on the existence of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). He said Saddam Hussein's possession of such weapons justified a preemptive strike "to defend our liberty and defend our lives." Two days before sending the US-led coalition forces into Iraq, Bush told the world that intelligence gathered by both the US and other governments "leaves no doubt that the Iraqi regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised."

Now less than one year, Bush's case has crumbled completely. David Kay, chief of the Iraq Survey Group that was assigned to look for WMD after the war, told the US Senate's armed services committee recently that with 85 percent of its work done, his group was not likely to find any such weapons. "It turns out we were all wrong, probably, in my judgment," he said.

Kay must have been referring to Bush and his advisers. Many others were proven correct in disagreeing with the US assessment of the Iraqi threat, not least among them the weapons inspectors sent by the United Nations. Mohamed el Baradei, head of the UN nuclear agency, told the UN Security Council that his team found "no evidence of resumed nuclear activities" after conducting 247 inspections of 147 suspected sites. Hans Blix, whose UN team conducted 731 inspections of potential chemical and biological weapons factories and storehouses, also cautioned against "jumping to the conclusion that (such weapons) exist."

But while most other countries, led by France and Germany, urged caution and argued for the continuation of UN inspections, Bush simply rushed headlong into war with the support of Britain's Tony Blair and a handful of other leaders. Apparently Bush had been misled by the 2002 National Intelligence Estimate which concluded that "Iraq has continued its weapons of mass destruction programs in defiance of UN resolutions and restrictions," investing more heavily in biological weapons.

That mistake has proven to be very costly in more ways than one, not counting the billions the United States blew to destroy Iraq and the billions more it has to spend for its reconstruction. Internationally it strained US relations with France and Germany to near breaking point. At home it threatens to sink the reelection bid of Bush. Where he seemed to be unbeatable just a few months back, now there are surveys showing that he can be beaten by the leading Democratic contender, Sen. John Kerry.

Scrambling to control the damage, Bush has been giving other reasons for the invasion of Iraq. First, he said Saddam had to be eliminated on account of his appalling human rights record. Lately, it is because Saddam could have made weapons of mass destruction. "We thought he had weapons," Bush said in a television interview Sunday. "The international community thought he had weapons. But he had the capacity to make a weapon and then let it fall into the hands of a shadowy group."

Those reasons may not be good enough, even for Americans. A recent poll said 55 percent of Americans had doubts about Bush and only 44 percent said he could be trusted. For the relatives of 534 American soldiers killed in Iraq, the changing rationale for the war is probably less than comforting and unacceptable. And what about the 10,000 Iraqi non-combatants who have been killed since the US-led invasion? Did they all die because of a failure of intelligence? Or was it because Bush simply had to strike back at someone—anyone—to give vent to America's fury over 9/11?

Without those weapons of mass destruction, Saddam apparently posed no threat to America and to the rest of the world. Saddam's defeat has thus not contributed one whit to making the world a safer place. So what was all the carnage about?

Nukes for sale

FOREIGN COMMENT

SO now we know. The father of Pakistan's H-Bomb, Abdul Qadeer Khan, may be a national hero, but he's also a greedy fellow who for 15 years has been running a sleazy weapons bazaar on the side. That's the picture President Pervez Musharraf wants to draw, at any rate, now that Khan stands accused of selling nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea.

The truth is likely to be darker...

Successive Pakistan regimes tolerated, if not encouraged, a culture where top scientists felt free to flog nuclear secrets to some of the world's most problematic countries, increasing the risk that terrorists might one day lay their hands on nightmare weapons.

In short, he's making the unthinkable, thinkable, by lowing the bar to using nuclear weapons.

The Toronto Star (Toronto)

Comelec is all bark, no bite

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

NOW that the 90-day campaign period has officially started, watch the trees, lampposts and walls bloom with the campaign posters of candidates despite warnings from the Commission on Elections. An SWS survey has found out that people don't trust the Comelec chair, Benjamin Abalos. Reason: the Comelec is all bark but no bite. It can't even enforce its own rules.

The laws on campaigning are clear: designated poster areas; maximum sizes for posters and streamers; limited frequency of media advertisements and commercials. Those caught in the act of pasting posters outside the designated areas can be arrested on the spot; the candidates themselves can be disqualified. But have you ever heard of a candidate in the past who has been disqualified, or any of his workers imprisoned, for violating the poster law?

Even before the start of the campaign period, the violations were already visible all over: oversized posters, streamers, banners and giant billboards everywhere, some of them belonging to the President herself. Thinly disguised commercials were regularly running on television. These were all premature campaigning prohibited by law. But does anybody pay attention?

All the Comelec has done was to issue press releases warning candidates of the penalties. Instead of following the law, former lawmaker Raul Roco even dared the Comelec to file charges against him—and against President Macapagal-Arroyo who he said is the most blatant violator. Predictably, the Comelec did not accept the challenge. Does it have the guts to file disqualification charges against the President? So all it did was issue more warning press releases which will also be ignored.

Candidates and their supporters claim that the premature posters and commercials did not say "vote for" the candidate, but only an idiot will believe that those were not a vote-getting gimmick. These are the same candidates asking the people to elect them to public office where they will take an oath to enforce all the nation's laws. How can they do that when they are the first to violate some of these laws?

Just drive through Quezon Avenue, around the Quezon Memorial Circle, and through Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City and you will see examples of these illegal and oversized posters, streamers and billboards. To its credit, the Comelec has caused the removal of the more scandalously illegal posters and billboards, but for some strange reason, a big number of posters remain. Why?

Already, election officers of Manila are putting up excuses for not being able to do their duties.

"We have enough manpower, but all of the six districts have no vehicles," said Narciso Arabe of Comelec's District 5.The Comelec has already deputized the Philippine National Police and the Metro Manila Development Authority to help its "Task Force Baklas." Why not deputize the Fire Department, too, so its fire ladders can be used to reach the higher streamers?

The Comelec has asked ordinary citizens to help by reporting those illegally posting posters. They can even arrest these workers caught in the act, it said, although it advised to "just take photos of the illegal posters" and submit them to the Comelec. We know what is going to happen. The Comelec will shuffle papers and take an eternity to prosecute the violators. The elections will be over and the violators already proclaimed as winners before the Comelec can get around to it and it will all be academic.

Just removing the posters is an exercise in futility. Besides draining scarce taxpayers' money for the effort, new posters will be in place the morning after the old ones are removed. Some examples of workers jailed and candidates disqualified should be shown so that others will not follow them. If they see the Comelec rules being violated with impunity and nobody being penalized, nobody would bother to obey these rules.

And what about gimmicks, not pasted but painted on walls and bridge railings in the barangay behind the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City? One Councilor "Ka Resty" Malangen has painted his name in foot-high red and black letters on the railings of a concrete bridge (three times on one bridge) and on the wall of a nearby fence. "Ka Resty" has been denounced repeatedly for this and he has promised to paint over these signs. He has not done so until now. Why doesn't the Comelec do it for him, bill him for it, and disqualify him as the law mandates?

For the Comelec to be believed and obeyed, it must do its duty firmly and quickly. Otherwise, nobody will trust it anymore.

* * *

What a fate for 353 innocent lovebirds imported from Europe. They were killed and burned just because the plane carrying them touched down in Bangkok, Thailand, where cases of the bird flu have been reported. And ironically, only a few days before Valentine's Day, the special day for lovers.

Isn't our Bureau of Quarantine panicking over the bird flu? Instead of massacring them (what did they ever do to deserve that?) wouldn't it have been better if they were put on quarantine until the incubation period of the virus is over? If they showed signs of infection, then they could have been terminated. That's the purpose of quarantine, isn't it? Or they could have been sent back to the Netherlands, their country of origin. Sure, the importer does not have the required permit for the birds. So, the importer should have been the one punished, not the innocent birds.

The dumbing of Juan de la Cruz

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I GOT quite a lot of e-mail and text messages from my column last Wednesday suggesting the shape of things to come. Namely, 18 years governed successively by Fernando Poe Jr., Noli de Castro and Bong Revilla. The groans could be heard from Aparri to Jolo. Someone asked me how I knew Revilla would be angling for the presidency, too. He said Revilla had indeed been taking lessons in public administration at the Development Academy of the Philippines. That was so apparently because someone had read his feng shui and told him he would become president of this country one day.

I wish I had the omniscience, but my basis for suggesting it was solely that Revilla had landed first in the SWS survey among the "senatoriables." But it is good to know at least that some movie stars are trying to study governance before going into governing. Most politicians are not studying acting before playing out their roles—as public officials. Not least of them the current occupant of Malacañang. Little wonder their audiences are filled only with incredulity.

My column last week sparked commentary as well about the tremendous depreciation of the country's politics along with its currency. It's not just the peso that's tumbling to an all-time low, my readers suggested, it is also the country's leadership. What can I say? I agree completely. I did write a column some weeks back saying exactly that, and surveying the steepness of the plunge.

In fact, the depreciation doesn't have to do only with movie stars replacing lawyers, economists, and diplomats as the country's leaders. It has to do with the lawyers, economists and diplomats doing precious little to make their replacement unconscionable. Putting a clown in place of a jester, or worse a crook, can't be such a bad turn. Someone asked me recently: What's wrong with FPJ? Would you rather have Gloria? Well, there are candidates other than FPJ and Gloria. But it's true, if it's just a choice between FPJ and Gloria, it's a no-brainer: None of the above. The same choice was presented to me during the impeachment trial by friends who were working in the Erap government: Who would you rather have, Erap or Gloria?

I can't say I am happy I said Gloria.

It's not just that movie stars are replacing "serious people," it's that seriousness in politics in general is going, if it hasn't gone at all. The standards have fallen—no, disappeared completely. As I said in another column on that subject, changing camps wasn't unknown before martial law, but the defectors at least bothered to produce a principle to justify the perfidy. "My loyalty to my party ends where my loyalty to my country begins," Manuel Quezon said. Fine words, to defend his decision to bolt his party which refused to vote for a bicameral government, which was his only chance to get out of the shadow of Sergio Osmeña. And people did not do it when the ideological lines were sharply drawn: The pro-Americans did not lie on the same bed with the Japanese collaborators.

Today, Loren Legarda and Miriam Santiago show the ease with which one can change stripes. Well, GMA herself, who came to power because other people fought to remove Miriam and company from power—or from plain sight, they spoiled the view—shows how easily one can be ungrateful.

Just as well, before martial law, people lied too but with some subtlety, if not embarrassment. Marcos criticized Diosdado Macapagal bitterly for embracing the Vietnam War (like father, like daughter) when he (Marcos) was senator only to send the Philcag to Vietnam when he became president. And of course he denied he was going to extend his term beyond the constitutional limits by becoming prime minister in a parliamentary system. It was true, but only because he was contemplating becoming a dictator in an authoritarian one.

Today, a president can vow on the grave of Jose Rizal not to run anymore and do it anyway.

It goes further. Before martial law, public officials also stole, but they did not pillage at epic scales, and they bothered to hide it. Certainly, they were stung by being depicted by the Manila Times and the Free Press, the most powerful broadsheet and magazine then, as *buayas*, an utter disservice to crocodiles which are never rapacious. Some went on to file libel charges against their tormentors.

Today, nobody cares about prosecuting Erap anymore. Just as nobody cares that the First Gentleman committed the same crime, being Jose Pidal. The first is a function of the second: Nobody cares that a previous president stole because a current one is doing the same thing.

But that brings us to something that has depreciated even more patently. That is public vigilance, or even mere public concern. It is all the more dramatic for apathy spreading so quickly after every heroic display of people power. Ah, but we do like sudden bursts of heroism during the last two minutes after languishing in mediocrity the rest of the game. We do like dying for democracy and loathe living for it. Today, a leader steals, lies and cheats, we say, "So what else is new?"

For all activism's excesses, I miss activism. Then, a miniscule rise in oil prices was enough to send people wearing red headbands to the streets and set up barricades to block the path of buses. A miniscule fall in the peso was enough to send people carrying fiery placards storming to the gates of Malacañang. Today, the oil companies raise their prices with impunity, the peso is tumbling to an all-time low, and the bishops tell us to pray some more, the economists tell us to tighten our belts some more, the entertainers (who are not all in the movies) tell us to laugh some more.

And we tell ourselves. That's it for me, *adios patria* not very *adorada*.

The dumb and the blind

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE OFFICIAL campaign for the 2004 presidential election kicked off yesterday, heralding the start of a four-month dialogue between the dumb and the blind.

If the events that surrounded yesterday's launch are an indication, there is little to show that the more than 40 million Filipino voters will emerge from the campaign better illuminated than they have been during the past few months, when issues were avoided like a contagious disease.

The voters and some presidential candidates will be talking past each other and informed dialogue is impossible in this circumstance. The opposition's coalition candidate stands out for conducting a campaign that shuns programs and policy, assuming that the voters are blind and will swallow any nonsense shoveled into their mouths. The biggest con game foisted by the opposition on the people is the charade in which the voters are being asked to elect as president a caricature of a presidential candidate without a political and economic program. This strategy is based on the assumption that voters are dupes who can be led by the nose by someone who keeps them ignorant about his plans.

Yesterday's events accented color and symbolic rituals and held little promise that political and economic programs will prevail over the usual song and dance exercise to provide entertainment to the masses who are being told that food will appear on their table through sheer magic and incoherent incantations.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, Fernando Poe Jr. and Sen. Panfilo Lacson held proclamation rallies that sparkled with color more than content. Poe heard Mass to open his campaign at his alma mater, San Beda College, where he got tired going to in the middle of high school. At a proclamation rally at Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City, Poe revealed his much-awaited program. It is easy to distribute texts of a program which can be ghost-written by experts, but the text is only the beginning of debate. The test is how able can Poe defend and explain his program. Disclosing a program is only the beginning of Poe's woes while he undergoes close scrutiny. He faces further severe tests ahead that will surely tax his lazy mind.

From today, he will be asked persistently to explain every word that is written on that document, and his explanations will reveal whether he understands what his ghosts have written. To divert attention to the harder task of being confronted by questions about his program—which is a token compliance of the demand to engage in informed dialogue and debate—the proclamation was highlighted by a show of movie and TV stars. Surely, the crowds were entertained, but they left the proclamation with emptier heads than they had before the rally. Tomorrow they will still be looking for food on the table for hungry mouths.

Since Lacson does not have the show-biz entertainment brigade at his call, he launched his rally in Cavite, his home province, after hammering the issue of law and order and strong-arm leadership—an issue he is good at, where his strength lies and which underlines the weakness of President Macapagal. Like Poe, Lacson avoids talking about the economy, and the President is expected to play up the economy theme as she pushes her campaign in the provinces.

But unlike Poe, Lacson tells us what issues are important to him and to the voters, whether or not they are scared with his reputation of human rights abuses during martial law. In the case of Lacson, we know what to expect. In the case of Poe, he comes in with the profile of a sponge. Raul Roco has not yet held his proclamation rally, although he started his campaign by hearing Mass at Villa San Miguel, the residence of retired Archbishop of Manila Jaime Cardinal Sin, with the cardinal officiating. How Sin could turn the tide of unfavorable public opinion polls for Roco—where he has been stagnating—is a problem. Sin was influential in swaying public opinion during two Edsa uprisings, but election 2004 is no longer people power and it is uncertain whether the retired cardinal could send people to the streets to vote for Roco, who seems to be in a time warp.

Neither will the Mass attended by Poe at San Beda College, the venue of his early education debacle, help reassure the voters that a miracle can make up for what he failed to learn after quitting school. No one in the Philippines is terribly excited over the election or over any single candidate. No issue exercises the public. On the contrary, the prevalent mood is uncertainty and pessimism over whether the election will bring a fresh wind of change. No one running for president—including the President and Poe—has captured the public imagination and has fostered high expectations for a change.

The voters are in a bind. While many want Ms Macapagal out of office, as many are not sure whether voting for Poe is like jumping from the frying pan to the fire.

Past elections worked up voters' adrenalin and passion—whether it was over personalities or issues. In the past, economic nationalism, the parity issue with the United States, even graft and corruption, were defining themes that dominated public debate and raised the temperature of public debate. Men of substance provoked debate in the past. In 2004, sparks cannot fly from an intellectual vacuum. This is why in the current campaign, entertainment and song and dance have driven out ideas and substance from the center of public debate.

The hallmark of this campaign is its sterility. Few are likely to gain lessons from this campaign.

Twenty questions

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

LET'S play a game of "20 Questions."

That's what pagbabago@pilipinas, a group of young leaders in business, the academe, the arts and media, civil society and other fields of endeavor suggests that voters do this campaign season. More specifically, the group has formulated a set of 20 questions—nine "Questions of General Direction" and 11 "Questions of Specific Action"—to put to the candidates in this year's elections. Whether running for national office, or for local posts, candidates need to be confronted with these specific questions on important and even perennial issues of policy and governance. That way, voters will have a better basis for their choice of candidates, as well as a "checklist" by which to judge an elected official's performance in office.

Too long have we voters been satisfied with little more than sound bites and motherhood statements, charming poses and staged performances. We seem to choose our drivers, house help and employees with more care and consideration than we do our leaders. Would we choose an accountant on the basis of charm and charisma? Would we entrust our health to a doctor simply because she can carry a tune and looks great in photographs? Then why are we so willing to entrust the country's future to people who refuse to tell us what they will do once they're in office? Why are we satisfied with little more than promises and bombast from our candidates?

Maybe that's because the electorate, we in the media included, have not bothered to pin the candidates down and force them to articulate their stand on issues, allowing them to slip and slide and get away with vague generalities or nice-sounding generalities.

Well, here's a template of questions against which we can judge a candidate's fitness for office and whether his/her positions on issues fit with our own personal visions and values. I'll present the nine "Questions of General Direction" first, along with some comments on what I think the question represents, then tackle the 11 "Questions of Specific Action" tomorrow.

* * *

FIRST question: How will you build an economy that generates enough jobs and incomes sufficient for our basic needs?

The question is designed to elicit a candidate's thoughts and plans on economic affairs, particularly how he or she plans to translate policies into jobs and incomes.

2. What will you do to keep our communities in cities and in the countryside peaceful, safe from crime, free of illegal drugs and protected from armed violence?

I think this question is especially useful to put before candidates at the local level, though it may well be used to get national candidates to expand their positions on such issues as the insurgency, drugs and kidnapping, and even the death penalty. I would also use this question to probe their thoughts on how to prevent violence in the home.

3. How will you protect and restore our environment for future generations?

This is not a question just for "greenies," as the reply could very well explain a candidate's overarching visions for development as well as measure the breadth and depth of their "vision thing."

4. How will you ensure that every Filipino will always have enough to eat?

To my mind, the question refers not just to a candidate's position on food security and agricultural production, but also on social justice and equitable sharing of resources.

* * *

5. HOW will you enable every Filipino to obtain adequate and affordable housing?

Housing is a basic need, and the loss of a home condemns a family to inhuman living conditions. Economists also say a vigorous housing program can be key to economic development. There have been numerous attempts to address the glaring gap in housing in this country, with limited success. What will the candidate do differently?

6. How will you deliver a responsive government that is free of scandal and is a source of pride rather than shame for all Filipinos?

This addresses issues of transparency and accountability, graft and corruption and "morality" at the highest levels.

7. How will you make the civilian bureaucracy and the military true, faithful and effective servants of the public interest?

This can be used as gauge of a candidate's thinking on the role of the police and military in national life, and commitment to re-tooling the bureaucracy despite risks to one's popularity.

8. How will you repay your *utang na loob* to your campaign contributors without compromising the public interests?

Seems fairly straightforward, though interrogators could use it to get candidates to open up on who their big contributors are, all in pursuit of transparency.

9. How will you rally and inspire Filipinos to work together in carrying out a strategy for succeeding in the world?

Again, the "vision thing," though perhaps we should ask them to be more specific and go beyond mere slogans or epithets.

* * *

NOTES: If you love to dance and do calisthenics and cheerleading routines, or if you simply love watching young, energetic women throw themselves into these activities, then "All Mixed Up" is for you. "All Mixed Up" features the Miriam College High School dance troupe, Sayawatha, "back-to-back" with the Miriam Pep Squad Cheerleaders in artistic and athletic routines on Friday, Feb. 13 at 6 p.m. at the UP Theater. "All Mixed Up" is directed by Nathalie Baluyot and Ryan Silva.

Members of the Union High School of Manila, Class of 1954, are invited to join their Golden Jubilee celebrations from Feb. 13-15. For more details, contact Ione Bueno Mison at 924-7731 or 0917-4288792; May Rose Quebral at 254-2395; Flor Lacanilao at 928-6514; or Virgilio Oblespias at 842-5648.

Rizal's valentines

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

VALENTINE'S Day (in the Philippines often referred to as "Valen Times") is just around the corner and I dread to even imagine the evening traffic this coming Saturday. As usual, love will be expressed anew, driving up prices for: red roses, chocolates, romantic dinners and short-time motel rooms. Ever pragmatic, my sisters have been hosting stress-free dinners on Valentine's at home where all couples are assured of parking, good food and comfortable surroundings to make Cupid's arrows more effective. This time of year, my publisher is reminded of the long awaited book "13 Women: The Loves of Jose Rizal" that promises to outsell all my other books combined. Naturally, the material is quite scarce and the little that is available is incomplete and has to be read and re-read between the lines.

For example, there is a woman who signed herself simply "Petite Suzanne." We know there were two Suzannes living in the Brussels house visited by Rizal when he took breaks from writing "El Filibusterismo." Apparently one was an "aunt" (Tante Suzanne) and the other was "small" Suzanne. What is small? We leave that to the imagination. There were about a dozen letters from this woman in the pre-war National Library, yet these were not included by T.M. Kalaw in the six-volume "Epistolario Rizalino." All we have are two letters without much context, except that Aunt Suzanne missed Rizal a lot. But it is "little" Suzanne who in a letter of Oct. 1, 1890 asked, "I hope your courts are open and I shall not have to wait a long time for your decision. Don't delay too long writing us because I wear out the soles of my shoes for running to the mailbox to see if there is a letter from you. Waiting impatiently for your letter in which you will tell me all that I want to know…"

The postscript is even more intriguing, "There will never be a home in which you are so loved as that in Brussels, so you little bad boy, hurry up and come back…" What were the other letters like? Why were they purposely kept from us? We will never know. The same can also be said about Leonor Rivera. While I have given up on ever finding the complete correspondence of Rizal and Leonor, I hope against hope that somewhere somehow copies survived so I don't have to fabricate them using a computer and microfilm rolls. The problem is that Leonor burned all of Rizal's love letters, perhaps including hers, gathered the ashes and sewed them into the hem of her wedding dress. Very dramatic indeed. But if she were alive, I would have strangled her for this. In the Rivera Museum in Camiling, Tarlac is a small box covered with embroidered silk that once contained these ashes now all gone. Rizal did not keep her letters either except for two written in January and December 1881. These letters, written when Leonor was 14, are really juvenile and I presume the tone and content changed as she matured. The editor and translator of Rizal's letters described one as, "just a girlish letter."

Reader, be the judge:

"I received your letter dated [December] 30 [1880] and I am informed of its contents.

"If I have not answered your letters it was not because I am bored corresponding with you. In fact, twice I wrote replies, but on the day I did so nobody came to visit me at the [Colegio de la Concordia], so I destroyed them, and besides I was already embarrassed.

"I am doubtful if the letter is yours because the signature is different. Perhaps you have put another name, fearing that I might despise it and if I despise it, it will not be your name that will be despised but somebody else's. If that is what you think, you are mistaken for you do not know how glad I am when I receive one of your dear letters; but you did well in putting another way in case, as you say, it may fall into the hands of strangers."

The relationship seems to have been secret at the time. Leonor signed herself "Taimis" but addressed Rizal formally as "esteemed friend." What was the pseudonym Rizal used? Even that is lost to history. Sometimes she wrote in code. Even that has been deciphered. Now try and make sense of the following:

"I would be glad if on the receipt of this you are in good health and happy.

"I was very much surprised that you had a letter for Papa and none for me; but at first when they told me about it, I did not believe it because I did not expect that a person like you would do such a thing. But later I was convinced that you are like a newly opened rose, very flushed and fragrant at the beginning but afterwards it begins to wither.

"Before, however, when I did not write you, you wrote me, but now no more. It seems that you have imitated my example when I went to Antipolo and you have done wrong because I was not at my own house, and besides you know very well that you cannot hide anything from those girls.

"I could very well write to Papa, but in order that you not say anything, I did not, though Mama had ordered me to do so. You cannot have these pretexts because you are to your home and nobody meddles with you. Truly I tell you that I am very resentful for what you have done and for another thing that I will tell you later when you come.

"Excuse the writing and all the mistakes you find in it. Command at your pleasure your true servant who kisses your hand."

What is the context? Alas, that too is lost to history.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

'Intsik' secrets to success (1)

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

A FEW weeks back I was surprised when INQUIRER's Zane Ronquillo called me to ask if I could be a speaker at an INQUIRER-sponsored seminar for students, "Generation Why 2" and be part of a panel of young entrepreneurs.

My friends are probably smiling now. As I explained to Zane, I'm not a business person and, well, I'm not exactly young but in the end, I did agree to speak (youth is, after all, in the heart and all that…) on the condition that I focus on the collective entrepreneurial experiences of the *Intsik*. The audience response to the six *Intsik* tips I gave was quite enthusiastic, so I thought I'd share them more through my column.

I'm using *Intsik* here intentionally, rather than Chinoy (Chinese-Filipino) to emphasize that we are referring to the experiences of the Chinese who left their homeland to try their luck here in the Philippines, as was the case with my grandparents.

Contrary to common perception, only a handful became super-taipans; in fact, I'd say none of them actually became billionaires. It was the second generation of *Intsik* who eventually accumulated wealth of taipan proportions, and even then, this was a very small minority, numbering not more than 10.

Many *Intsik* did, however, overcome overwhelming odds to build up fairly large businesses that have kept going through three, sometimes even four generations, and it's from them we need to learn.

But before going to the tips, I'd like to talk a bit about what the secrets to *Intsik* success are not. Awkward sentence construction there but let me elaborate. It's sad that in recent years, so much of the Chinese-Filipino cultural exchange, if you can call it that, has been in the area of *feng shui*, good luck charms and other cultural practices that supposedly generate wealth.

All that is epitomized by the "Kung Hei Fat Choy" greeting for Chinese New Year. The phrase means "wishing you happiness and wealth." As I wrote in my column for the lunar new year, that phrase is Cantonese, which is not spoken by most local ethnic Chinese. Rita Ching Tan, a family friend (and an expert on Chinese ceramics, if not Chinese culture), e-mailed me recently after I wrote about this "*kung hei fat choy*." Tita Rita pointed out that this greeting was concocted by Cantonese business people.

I agree with her that the greeting is crassly materialistic, and I worry that it adds to the stereotype that the Chinese are only interested in making money. In reality, throughout most of China, the new year greeting is simple: "*kung xi, kung xi*" (or in Hokkien "*giong hi, giong hi*"), which simply means "wishing you happiness": It's an all-purpose greeting used for many other happy occasions—someone's birthday, a wedding, a graduation. Certainly, the Chinese know that wealth has not always meant happiness, much less success.

Sorry about that long detour, but I didn't want to wait till the next lunar new year to say my (and Tita Rita's) piece about this *kung hei fat choy* nonsense, as well as all the other Chinese good luck charms. As far as I'm concerned, you can follow all the *feng shui* prescriptions and still end up unsuccessful if you don't put in the basics.

Which takes us to the *Intsik* secrets to success. They're all really very basic, but tend to be forgotten because people get fixated on externals like *bagua* mirrors and other lucky charms.

Let's get to the six tips then:

First, find, or better still, create your niche. People's needs, and wants, are so vast that you can find any number of business opportunities if you look hard enough. The problem with so much of our entrepreneurship is that we tend to go with fads. Just look at the street vendors—someone starts selling an umbrella hat for example and before you know it, about two dozen other vendors are selling the same thing. The market soon gets over-saturated, or people tire of seeing so many of the hats and then sales drop to zero.

Appropriately, my fellow panel members reflected the wide range of niches that one could create. Young entrepreneur JP Tanchangco chose to open a vegan restaurant called Chimara, anticipating that the vegetarian market, while still small now, will grow eventually. Chit Juan, president of Figaro Coffee, started her café at a time when Filipinos knew *kape* only as instant coffee, mixed with condensed milk. Over the years, Figaro's helped Filipinos to become more discriminating with their coffees… and desserts.

Also on our panel was Jay Aldeguer, who as a young backpacking globe-trotting tourist, noticed the market for souvenir T-shirts. He put up Islands Souvenirs, which now has a branch even in San Francisco… selling San Francisco souvenir T-shirts! Finally, there was Budjette Tan, president of Alamat Comics, who saw the potential in tapping local folklore for comic books. I was so thrilled by his presentation that I went around the malls looking for his productions. Some of you may have been intrigued by my column last week where I mentioned our local version of Superman—Zsazsa Zaturnah. Zsazsa is one of the Alamat star characters: a *bading* beauty parlor attendant who turns into a Super Bading saving people from every imaginable disaster!

This niche creation was what early Chinese migrants did. In the 19th century, as the Philippines opened to world trade, the Chinese moved in as brokers between farmer-producers and foreign buyers. In the 20th century, banned from owning land, another wave of Chinese migrants looked for new niches, such as in restaurants. The original fast-food restaurants in the Philippines, catering to people who needed low-cost food, on the go, were not McDonald's—it was the Chinese *panciterias* and *carinderias*, including some that became quite large businesses, for example Ma Mon Luk and Lingnam.

Oops, I've run out of space for today. I'll have the other five tips in Friday's column.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

THEY SAID

First at the bar

"To insist that the respondent commissioners be impeached first before they are brought before the bar of criminal justice will frustrate the ends of justice because it would impose a condition that is impossible to accomplish under the circumstances."

—Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said after filing graft charges against officials of the Commission on Elections

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Quest for unity, quest for peace

IN THE TURMOIL that followed September 11, religion has suddenly gained renewed focus in media and politics, partly because religion has been manipulated by some as the fulcrum for their blood-thirsty carnage and partly due to religious leaders' invigorated attempts to explain religious faith as a road to peace and unity.

A positive outcome of this interest in religion is the current trend that seeks to understand religious persuasions beyond one's own. Books that explore the real world of Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and others are flourishing in bookstores everywhere. Dialogues among religious leaders on the international and local levels have gained much needed impetus. It is now an imperative for Christians in our time to know the faith of their neighbors to dispel unkind notions about their doctrines and practices.

But while religious boundaries are crossed for the sake of knowledge, appreciation and acceptance of these great traditions, it is lamentable to find that Christianity itself cannot yet offer a united witness to the world. Ordinary but sincere Christians express astonishment at the way preachers identifying themselves as Christians, denounce not sin and iniquity, not discrimination and injustice, but Christians in the "other camp." While harmony among religions have been enhanced, harmony among believers of Christ remains a difficult venture.

Each year, Christians everywhere are encouraged to observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This practice of prayer intended to heal the historical divisions that arose in Christianity has been going on for years and has been embraced by the major branches of Christianity—Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant or Reformation-based churches. It is an uplifting experience to see pastors from various traditions and congregations from different denominations come together, not to dwell on the thorny, divisive principles, but simply to pray, to echo the sentiment of the Lord Jesus who envisioned that His followers may be one. (John 17:21)

Not many people know that the witness of Christians united in discipleship and service, is a potent impulse for the unity and peace of the world. Great things remain to be accomplished for the sake of humanity if only Christians would come together and concentrate on personal and social transformation.

Pope John Paul II, inaugurating the jubilee celebrations of the year 2000, invited all Christians to rejoice at the dawn of the third millennium, if not fully united, at least less divided, less scandalous to the world that needs a witness to peace and harmony from the followers of the Prince of Peace.

May pastors, ministers and priests of the different churches give Christian unity a chance to blossom so that our people may encounter Christianity's real face and its real motive.

—FR. RAMIL R. MARCOS,
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Unsafe drinking water not from water district

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Don't forget the teachers, please!

AMID THE POLITICAL maneuverings and posturings for the May 10, 2004 elections, there is one sector which is being forgotten and neglected. I refer to the teaching force of the Department of Education, who will once again assume the delicate task of protecting and defending the sanctity of the ballot.

The teachers, whom modern-day hero and martyr Benigno "Ninoy" S. Aquino Jr. called as the "collective conscience of the nation," will for yet another election serve as chairpersons and members of the board of election inspectors, putting their lives and limbs on the line.

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Likewise, there's the case of Filomena Tatlonghari, a public school teacher of Mabini, Batangas, who was gunned down when she protected with her body the ballot box that some heavily armed men tried to snatch from her.

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The union sent a thank you letter to the company for releasing the first P5,000 cash gift, which I believe is in compliance with Administrative Order No. 254 issued by Malacañang.

The P5,000 in question is only an additional benefit granted in a CWD Board Resolution approving the payment of a cash gift for P5,000, an extra cash gift for P5,000 and a one-month salary incentive for all employees of the district. These are not covered by any statutory authority but were voluntarily granted by our board of directors on the recommendation of management.

The unfounded report is affecting not only our company but more so the relationship of employees and officers of the Calamba Water District.

—MARTIN Q. TANCANGCO,
general manager,
Calamba Water District,
Lakeview Subd., Halang,
Calamba, Laguna

THIS is to clarify the points raised by Martin Q. Tancangco, general manager of the Calamba Water District (CWD), regarding the article entitled, "Workers protest unpaid cash gift."

On the non-verification of details on the P5,000 extra cash gift being demanded by CWD employees, the reporter verified this issue and obtained the side of the CWD management through a phone interview last Jan. 12, 2004. In fact, the reporter was first referred to Pablita Rapal of the firm's HR office since Tancangco was in a meeting in Manila. The reporter finally interviewed Paulina Samiano, administrative department manager, who did not mention any check ready for Tancangco's signature. Neither did she clarify that the P5,000 in question was not the extra cash gift under AO 254.

The employees maintain that the first P5,000 given them last December was the cash gift mandated by Department of Budget and Management Circular 2001-2002 and Republic Act No. 8441, not the extra cash gift under AO 254.

The information provided in the published article was verified information and the side of the management on the issue was properly given venue. The reporter was informed by a union officer that the management gave the extra cash gift to the employees last Jan. 15.

—CLARICE COLTING,
correspondent,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Alay sa Puso
children's hour

Through Children's Hour, you may be able to have as many Valentines as you wish, and more. "Alay sa Puso" is a Valentine's campaign of Children's Hour in cooperation with various restaurants and establishments that offer to pledge not just the most romantic services this Valentine's weekend, but the most meaningful as well. By patronizing our participating establishments in the Ayala Commercial Centers in Alabang and Makati, Eastwood, Shangri-la, Robinson's Commercial Centers and Rockwell, you will have an opportunity to offer your Valentine's token for our children.

Children's Hour is a fundraising campaign that calls on individuals and companies to donate an hour of their earnings in support of organizations with programs for the welfare and development of children. As we continue with our promise to translate children's dreams into reality, we hope to enlist the support of even more people. Should you wish to give your support, you may contact Children's Hour at 894-1663 or send an e-mail to ask@childrenshour.org.ph. You may also visit the Children's Hour website: http://www.childrenshour.org.ph.

Africana (Malate)
With melodious and soulful music from the great continent, enjoy exotica in food, drinks, and the friendliest of service. Africana's cigar outpost offers Cuban, Dominican, and Manila cigars. House Specialties include African Chicken, Grilled Calamari, Salad Maasai, and Hunter's Wild Boar Tapa.

Afrodisia Grill (Greenhills, San Juan)
With suggestive a menu, it is easy to mistake Afrodisia for just another fun bar. But go and try its unusual food offerings and you will see that the kitchen and dining staff take orgasmic pleasure in serving up consistently high quality food and drinks.

Bistro Remedios (Malate)
Bistro Remedios is THE restaurant to visit if you're strutting out local stuff to your foreign visitors. House specialties include Binukadkad na Pla-Pla, Laing, Crispy Tadyang, Sugpo sa Gata, Crispy Pata, and Sugpo sa Aligi.

Bizu Patisserie (Greenbelt)
At Bizu, cakes are not merely baked - they are created. They are not merely kept in glass cabinets - they are sat on pedestals. That's because they are not only special - they are unique. Each unlike any other.

The Blue Kitchen (Rockwell & Shangri-la)
The Blue Kitchen, established in 1996, retails specialty food products from the Philippines and around the world, all of them homemade with pride, using only authentic ingredients and old family recipes.

Cafe Adriatico (Malate)
Meeting place of people of all walks of life, persuasions, preferences, and styles. A full menu is available but light meals, salads, sandwiches, omelets and fondues are also served. House specialties include Spareribs Adobo, Salpicao, Classic Burger, and Cheese & Chocolate Fondues.

Cafe Havana (Greenbelt & Malate)
As its name suggests, Café Havana is Latino-Cubano, and it lives the spirit of the island from its decor to its food and music. House Specialties include Spareribs Habanera and Caribbean Salmon with Mango Mambo Black Rice.

Cibo (all branches)
CIBO serves simple, modern, Italian café, in a sleek modern setting. The menu centers on extensive selections of panini, grilled italian sandwiches, and pasta. Hearty soups and refreshingly light salads are also served.

Cucina Victoria (Rockwell)
Pasta and more-Italian food with other friendly inputs. The most popular items include a good American clam chowder-white, not 'red-served in a hollowed-out bread bowl. Also Vicky's Oriental Salad and the Funghi all' Herbe: mushrooms, sun-dried tomatoes, herbs in olive oil on capellini.

DISH (Rockwell)
The premier dining and entertainment center of Makati. They have five (5) popular restaurants within their premises catering to the various needs of their customers with a discerning taste in food choices, each with a unique cuisine and menu specialties.

In The Mood (Malate)
In The Mood offers sophisticated dance enthusiasts over 4,000 musical selections ranging from swing to salsa, tango to mambo, rhumba to reggae. House specialties include paella and pasta and the full menu from it's sister restaurant below MIL NOVECIENTOS.

Kwang Tong (Glorietta)
Kwang Tong Restaurant is a locally based restaurant that serves authentic Cantonese cuisine and quality service at a very reasonable price. We guarantee you a total dining experience to remember.

Max Brenner (Greenbelt)
Definitely a choco haven for all the chocolate lovers and food connoisseurs. With a wide array of chocolate products to eat, drink and give away as presents, the Max Brenner Chocolate Bar offers a superb gourmet selection.

Mil Novecientos (Malate)
From the Spanish tapas to the French soufflés, from the original paellas to the thin crusted Italians pizza, from the delightful desserts to the espresso based brews, it's pleasurable dining from start to finish.

Oakwood Premier Ayala Center
Oakwood Premier Ayala Center, located in the heart of Makati, offers a world of comfort and security for business and leisure travelers and long staying executives. Stay for a day, a week, a month or a year. Experience the wonder of Oakwood Premier, where their service and amenities feel like a luxury hotel with a comfort of a full-sized residence.

Ebun (Greenbelt)
Tucked at Greenbelt 3 Makati, Ebun is Kapampangan for eggs, boast of tasty and affordable home cooked Kapampangan meals.

Mangan (Glorietta)
The secret of the goodness of Kapampangan food is in its preparation, tedious but it's all worth it. Mangan Restaurant is authentic Kapampangan.

San Mig (Alabang Town Center)
Our Restaurant and Bar offers a wide range of menu, weekly lunch specials, food festivals, and an extensive selection of drinks.

Sari-Sari Cafe (Eastwood & Glorietta)
Sari-Sari Cafeteria was conceptualized as an offshoot of the Sari-Sari Store. Three years ago, the first café was opened to serve their clients who were looking for a place to meet and unwind. This Valentine's Weekend (Feb. 13-15), an extra-special menu will be served.

Una Mas Mingoy's (Greenbelt)

Figaro (Greenbelt & Glorietta)

Ayala Center Cinemas (Greenbelt, Glorietta, Alabang Town Center)
Bacolod Chicken Inasal (Robinsons Galleria)
Dunkin' Donuts (Robinsons Manila)
Kulinarya Kitchen (Powerplant Mall, Rockwell)
Pazzo (Powerplant Mall, Rockwell)
Subway (Glorietta)
Thai Kitchen (Robinsons Galleria)

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Lakeview Subd., Halang,
Calamba, Laguna

THIS is to clarify the points raised by Martin Q. Tancangco, general manager of the Calamba Water District (CWD), regarding the article entitled, "Workers protest unpaid cash gift."

On the non-verification of details on the P5,000 extra cash gift being demanded by CWD employees, the reporter verified this issue and obtained the side of the CWD management through a phone interview last Jan. 12. 2004. In fact, the reporter was first referred to Pablita Rapal of the firm's HR office since Tancangco was in a meeting in Manila. The reporter finally interviewed Paulina Samiano, administrative department manager, who did not mention any check ready for Tancangco's signature. Neither did she clarify that the P5,000 in question was not the extra cash gift under AO 254.

The employees maintain that the first P5,000 given them last December was the cash gift mandated by Department of Budget and Management Circular 2001-2002 and Republic Act No. 8441, not the extra cash gift under AO 254.

The information provided in the published article was verified information and the side of the management on the issue was properly given venue. The reporter was informed by a union officer that the management gave the extra cash gift to the employees last Jan. 15.

—CLARICE COLTING,
correspondent,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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Alay sa Puso
children's hour

Through Children's Hour, you may be able to have as many Valentines as you wish, and more. "Alay sa Puso" is a Valentine's campaign of Children's Hour in cooperation with various restaurants and establishments that offer to pledge not just the most romantic services this Valentine's weekend, but the most meaningful as well. By patronizing our participating establishments in the Ayala Commercial Centers in Alabang and Makati, Eastwood, Shangri-la, Robinson's Commercial Centers and Rockwell, you will have an opportunity to offer your Valentine's token for our children.

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Africana (Malate)
With melodious and soulful music from the great continent, enjoy exotica in food, drinks, and the friendliest of service. Africana's cigar outpost offers Cuban, Dominican, and Manila cigars. House Specialties include African Chicken, Grilled Calamari, Salad Maasai, and Hunter's Wild Boar Tapa.

Afrodisia Grill (Greenhills, San Juan)
With suggestive a menu, it is easy to mistake Afrodisia for just another fun bar. But go and try its unusual food offerings and you will see that the kitchen and dining staff take orgasmic pleasure in serving up consistently high quality food and drinks.

Bistro Remedios (Malate)
Bistro Remedios is THE restaurant to visit if you're strutting out local stuff to your foreign visitors. House specialties include Binukadkad na Pla-Pla, Laing, Crispy Tadyang, Sugpo sa Gata, Crispy Pata, and Sugpo sa Aligi.

Bizu Patisserie (Greenbelt)
At Bizu, cakes are not merely baked - they are created. They are not merely kept in glass cabinets they are sat on pedestals. That's because they are not only special - they are unique. Each unlike any other.

The Blue Kitchen (Rockwell & Shangri-la)
The Blue Kitchen, established in 1996, retails specialty food products from the Philippines and around the world, all of them homemade with pride, using only authentic ingredients and old family recipes.

Cafe Adriatico (Malate)
Meeting place of people of all walks of life, persuasions, preferences, and styles. A full menu is available but light meals, salads, sandwiches, omelets and fondues are also served. House specialties include Spareribs Adobo, Salpicao, Classic Burger, and Cheese & Chocolate Fondues.

Cafe Havana (Greenbelt & Malate)
As its name suggests, Café Havana is Latino-Cubano, and it lives the spirit of the island from its decor to its food and music. House Specialties include Spareribs Habanera and Caribbean Salmon with Mango Mambo Black Rice.

Cibo (all branches)
CIBO serves simple, modern, Italian café, in a sleek modern setting. The menu centers on extensive selections of panini, grilled italian sandwiches, and pasta. Hearty soups and refreshingly light salads are also served.

Cucina Victoria (Rockwell)
Pasta and more Italian food with other friendly inputs. The most popular items include a good American clam chowder-white, not red-served in a hollowed-out bread bowl. Also Vicky's Oriental Salad and the Funghi all' Herbe: mushrooms, sun-dried tomatoes, herbs in olive oil on capellini.

DISH (Rockwell)
The premier dining and entertainment center of Makati. They have five (5) popular restaurants within their premises catering to the various needs of their customers with a discerning taste in food choices, each with a unique cuisine and menu specialties.

In The Mood (Malate)
In The Mood offers sophisticated dance enthusiasts over 4,000 musical selections ranging from swing to salsa, tango to mambo, rhumba to reggae. House specialties include paella and pasta and the full menu from it's sister restaurant below MIL NOVECIENTOS.

Kwang Tong (Glorietta)
Kwang Tong Restaurant is a locally based restaurant that serves authentic Cantonese cuisine and quality service at a very reasonable price. We guarantee you a total dining experience to remember.

Max Brenner (Greenbelt)
Definitely a choco haven for all the chocolate lovers and food connoisseurs. With a wide array of chocolate products to eat, drink and give away as presents, the Max Brenner Chocolate Bar offers a superb gourmet selection.

Mil Novecientos (Malate)
From the Spanish tapas to the French soufflés, from the original paellas to the thin crusted Italians pizza, from the delightful desserts to the espresso based brews, it's pleasurable dining from start to finish.

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Oakwood Premier Ayala Center, located in the heart of Makati, offers a world of comfort and security for business and leisure travelers and long staying executives. Stay for a day, a week, a month or a year. Experience the wonder of Oakwood Premier, where their service and amenities feel like a luxury hotel with a comfort of a full-sized residence.

Ebun (Greenbelt)
Tucked at Greenbelt 3 Makati, Ebun is Kapampangan for eggs, boast of tasty and affordable home cooked Kapampangan meals.

Mangan (Glorietta)
The secret of the goodness of Kapampangan food is in its preparation, tedious but it's all worth it. Mangan Restaurant is authentic Kapampangan.

San Mig (Alabang Town Center)
Our Restaurant and Bar offers a wide range of menu, weekly lunch specials, food festivals, and an extensive selection of drinks.

Sari-Sari Cafe (Eastwood & Glorietta)
Sari-Sari Cafeteria was conceptualized as an offshoot of the Sari-Sari Store. Three years ago, the first café was opened to serve their clients who were looking for a place to meet and unwind. This Valentine's Weekend (Feb. 13-15), an extra-special menu will be served.

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(Greenbelt)

Figaro
(Greenbelt & Glorietta)

Ayala Center Cinemas
(Greenbelt, Glorietta, Alabang Town Center)

Bacolod Chicken Inasal (Robinsons Galleria)

Dunkin' Donuts (Robinsons Manila)

Kulinarya Kitchen (Powerplant Mall, Rockwell)

Pazzo (Powerplant Mall, Rockwell)

Subway (Glorietta)

Thai Kitchen (Robinsons Galleria)

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Army, police announce fall of 2 Sayyaf men in Zamboanga

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Military and police authorities here yesterday announced the arrest of at least two suspected Abu Sayyaf members during separate operations Monday.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko said soldiers arrested Totoh Aling at the public market around 2:30 p.m. on Monday.

Kyamko said Aling, a "follower of ASG sub leader Benang Andang and Khadaffy Janjalani," was arrested based on a warrant of arrest issued by a local court for his alleged participation in kidnapping.

Supt. Mario Yanga, city police director, said that also on Monday, police authorities arrested a Nasser Muvin, who was identified by an informer as an Abu Sayyaf member.

Muvin, 22, was arrested along Murga Street around 3 p.m. on Monday. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

PAINFUL CURE

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

A child in a public elementary school in Toril, Davao City, cries in pain as he receives an anti-measles vaccine courtesy of the health department's nationwide campaign against the disease.

LDP adopts disgruntled Negros legislator

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) has adopted Negros Occidental Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada after his resignation from the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

Lozada is now running for reelection under the LDP, although he said he has not signed any document or taken his oath as a member of the opposition party.

But he said he has been designated district chair of the LDP in the fifth district effective last Monday.

Asked if his leaving Lakas-CMD meant he would support Fernando Poe Jr. for president, Lozada said he has yet to make a decision.

The Angara-wing LDP is part of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, whose standard-bearer is Poe. Another LDP wing is supporting the presidential bid of Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Lozada resigned on Monday from Lakas-CMD after he was stripped of his position as Lakas-CMD vice president for international affairs and provincial chair for Negros Occidental.

He felt further humiliated when the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), the original party of President Macapagal-Arroyo, endorsed Ignacio Arroyo Jr., brother of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

The presidential brother-in-law is challenging Lozada's re-election bid in the province's fifth district.

"They might ask what my problem is since I am still the official Lakas candidate," Lozada said. "My question is how do you separate the President from her brother-in-law?"

Priests told to keep hands off politics or face punishment

MATI, Davao Oriental—The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) has urged the faithful to watch out and report "politicking priests" so these "erring clergymen" would be punished.

CBCP president Archbishop Fernando Capalla told reporters here Monday that he issued the warning amid reports that some Catholic priests use the pulpit to campaign for their favored politicians.

Capalla said the punishment would depend on the gravity of the offense.

Mati assistant parish priest Fr. Sammy Bronola earlier admitted to the INQUIRER that there were indeed "many priests in the Davao provinces who shamelessly use the pulpit to campaign for their favored politicians."

"These politicking priests must be punished or expelled from priesthood," Bronola said.

Capalla, however, said the erring priests would not be expelled from the Church just because of politicking.

He said the Catholic faithful must help the Church in identifying these politicking clergymen "so we will be able to address this problem."

"It is best for the faithful to report them to their bishops and I am sure the bishops will act on it," the bishop added.

A priest here was earlier reported to be employed by the provincial government.

Sr. Melvin Manligoy, spokesperson of Mati Bishop Patricio Alo, said they were "shocked" when they learned that Fr. Nestor Morata, who used to be the chancellor of the Diocese of Mati, has been designated as chief of the provincial government's Barangay Affairs Office.

Morata refused to comment on the report, saying he did not want to be interviewed.

Members of the Jehovah's Witnesses had stayed away from politics deliberately in the belief that politics is a manipulation of the devil based on passages in the Bible.

The religious congregation stuck to the practice of refusing to vote or participate in any form of politics.

In late January, the CBCP told social communications directors, broadcasters, editors and reporters all over the country to collectively educate constituents, including the training of electorates to be critical in viewing political advertisements.

Bishop Jesus Cabrera, chair of CBCP's Episcopal Commission for Social Communications and Mass Media at a training seminar in Quezon City, told about 70 media practitioners nationwide to organize themselves into a network to propagate the good influences of media against the bad ones.

Cabrera exhorted media men to pursue steps to disseminate good news.

Some participants said media is being used by candidates to project a one-sided image of them that would win them votes. *Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Iloilo public school teachers demand higher pay during polls

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Public school teachers in Iloilo want the Commission on Elections to grant them higher pay for poll duties.

In a statement, the Panay Alliance of Concerned Teachers (Pact) said electoral duties imposed on teachers were considered high risk and an additional burden.

The teachers who asked for higher pay came from the Iloilo National High School (INHS), La Paz National High School (LPNHS), and the Pact.

Mary Grace Lobaton, Pact spokesperson, said each teacher should be given a per diem of P2,000 for election services and an additional P500 to cover transportation costs of election materials.

There should also be a hazard pay of P1,000 for teachers serving in election hot spots and an insurance coverage of P500,000. The payment for poll duties should be released promptly.

Teachers are also seeking 10-day leave credits for every day of election service. Legal assistance should also be provided for teachers who may be charged with administrative or criminal cases while performing poll duties.

The Pact also wants the Comelec to recognize the presence of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers Election Hotline.

Georgie Floro, INHS Faculty and Employees Union president, said poll duties should be voluntary.

She said the per diem of P900 could not even compensate for the risk they experience during election time.

"We are usually on the receiving end every time there are electoral protests. We get caught between warring politicians and their followers," she said.

Floyd Dignadice, president of LPNHS Teachers and Employees Association, said the hazard pay is justified because of the "danger and emotional stress that the electoral process brings."

In a meeting with ACT in Manila last Jan. 30, Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos stood pat on the P900 per diem given to the teachers.

But he said he was open to an additional P300 allowance.

Abalos said the Comelec has yet to identify the hot spots where teachers serving there could get insurance coverage worth P100,000. The poll body had approved P5 million in legal assistance funds.

5 MILF members slain in clash as talks near

COTABATO CITY—At least five Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels were killed during a clash in the outskirts of Kabacan, North Cotabato on Sunday, the military said yesterday.

The encounter occurred barely a week before government and rebel negotiators fly to Kuala Lumpur for the resumption of exploratory peace talks.

Lt. Col. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said the rebels initiated the clash by attacking a military outpost manned by elements of the 38th Infantry Battalion in Barangay Pisan.

He said the rebels fired rocket-propelled grenades against the soldiers who managed to retaliate and repulse the attackers.

The attackers were led by Commander Abdullah Matitik of the MILF's 105th Brigade, said Ando.

"Although outnumbered, the soldiers managed to return fire," he said.

The Pisan attack was the second offensive launched by the rebels this month, according to Ando.

He said that last week, MILF forces also ambushed a team of soldiers along the Cotabato-General Santos City highway in Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao.

No one was hurt on the government side.

"This is a clear violation on their part. We are strictly observing the bilateral ceasefire," Ando said.

The MILF could not be reached for comment but its website said they were preparing for the Feb. 16 to 17 exploratory talks. *Rosa-May V. de Guzman and Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Rebs gun down Quezon cop official

LUCENA CITY—A communist hit squad gunned down the police deputy chief in Mauban, Quezon on Sunday, a day before the formal resumption of the peace talks between the communists and the Macapagal administration.

Police identified the victim as SPO3 Paulino Mancenido, who was shot point blank while on board a tricycle.

The unidentified suspects flagged down the tricycle while cruising Quezon Street at around 3 p.m, police said.

When the tricycle stopped, two of the suspects opened fire at Mancenido, killing him on the spot.

Three other suspects acted as lookout, according to the police report.

The victim suffered four fatal bullet wounds in the head, neck and chest that caused his immediate death.

The suspects casually walked away from the crime scene towards Sampaloc town.

PO1 Ernesto Sangcap, desk officer of the Mauban police station, said a statement from the New People's Army's Apolonio Mendoza Command in Quezon owned responsibility to the killing. The statement was delivered in the station by a civilian several hours after the murder.

According to the report of the Mauban News Cable Television, the statement said Mancenido was killed due to his alleged protection racket that involved illegal drugs, illegal fishing and illegal logging, and extortion activities. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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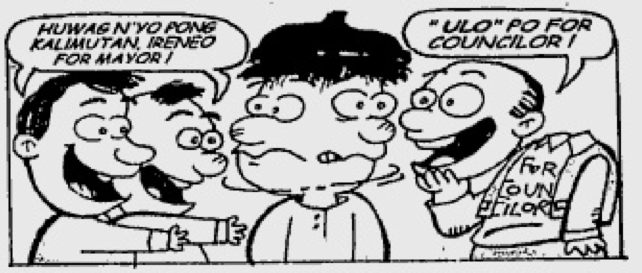
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FOR COUNCILOR

'Crazy' names of bets in Cordillera elections

By Frank Cimatu
Baguio City

WHEN Fernando Poe Jr. was adopted son of the Cordillera on Jan. 17 at the Baguio Botanical Garden and given a "native" name, Cordillerans are now wondering if his name "Camwakhan" (great warrior in Bontok) can be valid during the elections.

Many politicians running for office in the region used their "native" names for their "stage names," like former National Commission on Indigenous Peoples Chair David "Annab" Daoas, who is running for congressman in Mt. Province, and Victorino "Piddit" Tabbenan, who is running for councilor in Luba, Abra.

But many others just wanted a catchy name.

Balner Calantas Damonloc, who is running for a seat in Benguet's provincial board, adopted "Baltic" or "crazy" as his name. Which, come to think of it, is what the elections have become.

John Diaz chose "Sadam" when he filed his candidacy for the congressional seat in Mt. Province. Diaz, however, changed his mind and later decided to run for Mt. Province governor where he will face "Rambo," the stage name of candidate Harry Dominguez.

Last we heard, Sadam was thinking of running for vice mayor of Bontoc. The joke there is that he will win in Talubin village, often misspelled as "Taliban."

Reynaldo Blas hopes that lightning will strike when he runs for vice mayor of Flora, Apayao, because his stage name is "Kimat" or "lightning."

Baguio Councilor Faustino Olowan will seek reelection using again his famous nickname "Ulo." Another council aspirant, Julius Flores Kitong, will bank on his initials made famous by slain United States President John F. Kennedy or "JFK."

Apolonio Suma-al, a council aspirant in Tanudan, Kalinga, chose "Osmeña" as his name while rival Gabriel Sumoldong chose "Enrile."

Warlord Ulanday, who is running for Kalinga board member, chose to soften his name by choosing "Welod." Stalin Alaoag (Luna, Apayao council) and Stalin Piagan (Pudtol, Apayao council) are satisfied with their names.

But sometimes your name can go against you as what happened to some Abra mayoral aspirants.

Ireneo Molina is the main rival of Tayum Mayor Rogelio Elvena, but he suddenly found that he would also fight Ireneo A. Molina for the same post. Not only that, Molina's nickname "Imi" is eerily similar to Ireneo A. Molina's "Aymi."

In Boliney town, Mayor Benildo Balao-as will fight Ronald Balao-as, so they will be known as "Benny" and "Ronnie."

Ecosystem centers to replace dumps

By Carmela Reyes
Guiguinto, Bulacan

HAZARDOUS and foul-smelling landfills and dumps in the 24 towns and cities of Bulacan will be converted into "ecosystem centers" by 2006 to bring economic and environmental benefits to the province.

Gov. Josefina de la Cruz said the provincial government had tapped the environmental group Bangon Kalikasan to build an ecological waste center at Barangay Malis in Guiguinto town.

The facility will serve as a model for the establishment of an alternative, environment friendly waste disposal system in the province, De la Cruz said.

"Our target in Bulacan is to have zero landfill and dumpsite by 2010. With this start, we are confident we can achieve that," she said.

She said the open landfills and dumps threatened the health of residents and dump workers. She said this might result in more serious health and environmental problems if this would not be properly addressed immediately.

De la Cruz said the effort was also in compliance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Luz Sabas, founder of the Bangon Kalikasan, said the provincial government-funded project began in November with the construction of a materials recovery facility (MRF), a two-story structure in the Malis dump that will recycle wastes.

Sabas said only segregated garbage in every village and factories would be taken to the MRF.

During a recent seminar-workshop that the Bangon Kalikasan held for Guiguinto officials and 14 barangay chairs, Sabas raised the need for the creation of a barangay solid waste management team that will supervise and manage waste collection.

The first task of this team is to build its own MRF.

Sabas said her group's experts were ready to go to every village and train the residents once the MRF was built.

The next step is for the barangay solid waste management team to conduct information campaigns on waste segregation in order to reach households and industries.

Ofelia Panganiban, an expert on recycled materials, said recyclable garbage could be sold while others could be turned into new products that can be reused in the households.

Bangon Kalikasan experts and personnel will train families and factory representatives on recycling so they can earn additional income.

Dr. Judea Millora, the lead personnel on the collection and treatment of medical or hospital wastes, will take charge of training members of the barangay solid waste management team on handling hazardous or infectious wastes.

Cecilia Giron, also of the Bangon Kalikasan, said organic wastes could be made into fertilizers to help local farmers sustain a good production.

Guiguinto Mayor Ambrocio Cruz said fertilizers derived from organic wastes would help enrich the ornamental plant industry of Guiguinto.

New 'documentors' of Sagada lifestyle

By Desiree Caluza
Sagada, Mt. Province

IT MAY have all started with native photographer Eduardo Masferre's foresight on how the traditional lifestyle of the Igorots would vanish in decades to come.

Sixty years ago, Masferre went around the towns of Bontoc and Sagada in Mt. Province and parts of Kalinga to document the lives of the people from the mountains.

Masferre's biographer, Bartolome Dao-as, said the resulting photographs were "priceless links to the people's ancestral past and cultures."

But the late artist's dream of preserving the Igorots' way of life in still pictures should not end as amateur photographers based in Sagada are starting to document contemporary Igorot lifestyle through the guidance of Cordillera photographer Tommy Hafalla.

Twenty-seven black and white photographs taken by Hafalla's seven local trainees were displayed for public viewing at the Sagada town hall.

The exhibit, titled "Id Sagada," received praises from residents when it opened in December last year. Upon seeing the photographs, the residents said they were glad that they had found "new documentors" of local culture and tradition.

Hafalla, who considers Sagada his second home, would find himself training even his godchildren and giving them pointers on basic photography.

He said he was able to participate in the recent *begnas*, an agricultural ritual of the Sagada elders, because some of his trainees handled the documentation of the event.

One trainee, potter Lope Bosaing, left his kiln on Nov. 1 to catch the elders, garbed in traditional g-strings, perform elaborate rituals.

Sagada rituals

Bosaing, a relative of Lakay Kabayo, whose classic portrait was taken by Masferre in 1950, said he wanted to capture the rituals that Sagada has not lost despite modern times.

His portraits of two *lakay* (male elders), Padingi and Mangilang, are renditions of Sagada's elders practicing a tradition, a way of life.

Mayor Thomas Killip said the *begnas* still held a positive and strong foothold in Sagada (pop: 10,000), where adherence to animism and nature worship is considered a mystery despite the presence of a western religion.

Joel Abad's photographs show the parallelism of local religious practices, through the Christian cemetery (*Pagkaoban di Christiano*) and the town's hanging coffins (*Pagkaoban di Pagano*).

Abad described what Sagada resident Dinah Elma Omengan wrote in her thesis, "Death and Burial Rituals and other Practices and Beliefs of the Igorots of Sagada" that the people were open to change and live in practical terms.

"I'm incapable of describing life in Sagada. I wonder, would this paradise be the same again after I blink my eye?" asked Violeta Miranda, a Baguio City resident who regularly visits the tourist town with friend Candy Ruth Campol.

The photographs of Miranda and Campol are included in the exhibit.

"LAKAY Padingi" by Lope Bosaing

Miranda mirrors the community life common in other Cordillera villages through "Tambo," which features a rice field and a traipsing woman farmer, and through "Ung-unga," a candid shot of a girl and her pet dog.

Her "Siopao id Sagada" features the local rice cakes that are prepared through a rich and elaborate ritual during the town's agricultural cycle.

Contemporary culture

Campol captures the contemporary culture of the villages. There are the ubiquitous *sampayan* (clothesline) that she called "Lita-An-gan" and a bench made of wood at the backdrop of sunlight in "Mun-na nanong."

Campol also took a portrait of a pig peering through a window. Locally known as *alingo*, the pig is a regular part of rituals and used as a sacrifice to appease spirits.

The photographs taken by Siegrid Bangyay and Shawnee Anongos give glimpses of Sagada's people and famous spots. Bangyay's photographs, "Nan Maange" and "Baket Liganay," feature old women doing farm chores. Her photographs also capture the simple joys of children in "Aklis" and "San Esa Ay Onga."

Anongos, in his photograph "Ngoloban," features a boy dancing. He also took shots of the Bokong Falls and the rice terraces of Digdig or the "Payew id Digdig."

Since changes are unavoidable in every society, Mindy Stutzman said she was taking a glimpse of a "possible future" through her images, such as "The Last Piece of Lumber," a shot of an old pine tree.

Stutzman's photographs are metaphors on how Sagada might become. Her "Classroom" shows a student in a classroom, "Turf Fight" shows two boys gamely playing in a mock boxing fight, and "Seeking new life forms" shows two satellite dishes.

"As expansion and modernization progress, a community can lose its natural beauty to give way to neighborhoods, business and new roads. Citizens must make decisions now on what they cherish most about their environment, their place," Stutzman said.

"TAMBO" by Violeta Miranda

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ELECTION 2004 Election period at a glance

Dec. 15, 2003
- Start of filing of certificates of candidacy and nomination.
- Gun ban starts and will end June 9, 2004. Also banned are changing a precinct territory or creating a new precinct; organizing or maintaining reaction or strike forces; candidates' use of security personnel or bodyguards from PNP or AFP or other law enforcement agency; suspension of any elective provincial, city, municipal or barangay officials

Jan. 5, 2004
- Last day of filing certificate of candidacy and nomination

Feb. 10
- Official start of campaign for president, vice president and senators and political parties, organizations or coalitions participating under the party list system
- Start of ban till May 10 of donations or gifts in cash or in kind, etc.
- Posting of certified list of voters

March 12
- Start of voting for overseas seafarers who are registered voters under RA 9189 or Overseas Absentee Voting Act, (host-country time) up to 3 p.m. of May 10, 2004 (Philippine time)

March 25
- Start of campaign period for members of the House of Representatives and elective provincial, city and municipal officials

March 26
- Last day for submission of nominees in the Party List.
- Banned acts till May 9, 2004: appointment or hiring of new employees; creation and filling up of new positions; promotions or giving of salary increases or privilege to government employees. Start of public works ban

April 8 (Maundy Thursday) and April 9 (Good Friday)
- Campaigning is prohibited

April 11
- Start of voting for overseas land based registered voters (host country time) up to 3 p.m. of May 10, 2004 (Philippine Time).

May 8
- Last day of campaigning for all positions

May 9
- The following acts are prohibited: Campaigning, selling, furnishing, offering, buying, serving or taking intoxicating liquor, etc.; giving, accepting free transportation, food, drinks and things of value

May 10
- Election day. Casting of votes from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. .
- Substitution of candidates for all positions by reason of death or total incapacity is allowed until midday of election day
- Prohibited acts: Campaigning, soliciting votes or undertaking any propaganda within the polling place or within a radius of thirty meters; liquor selling, furnishing, offering, buying, serving or taking etc.; giving, accepting free transportation, food, drinks and things of value; holding of fairs, cockfights, horse races or similar sports; opening of booths or stalls for the sale, etc. of merchandise, refreshments within (30) meters radius from polling place
- Convening of City/Municipal/District/Provincial, and Special Boards of Canvassers

May 11 - June 10
- Filing of sworn statements of election contributions and expenditures

Source: Comelec Resolution No. 6420

Not all show biz are in 'Da King's' camp

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—Fernando Poe Jr. may have the Sex Bomb dancers hoofing it up on his campaign stage, but President Macapagal-Arroyo has the Viva Hot Babes on hers.

As if to show that even the movie world was not voting as a solid block for one of its own, Viva Entertainment Inc. big boss Vic del Rosario yesterday led a swarm of show business personalities, mostly from his stable of bankable babes and beaus, who attended the signing by President Macapagal-Arroyo of RA 9239, otherwise known as the Opti-Media Bill, at the picturesque National Arts Center here.

While many saw the event as "an act of defiance" vis-a-vis perceived widespread support from tinseltown for movie king and opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., the producer's presence shattered the myth that the movie industry would vote as one for the presidency.

But Del Rosario maintained that the directors, producers, actors, actresses, singers and other television personalities, collectively called the "Artista para kay Presidente Arroyo" who joined the event, just wanted to show their gratitude to the President "who gave us a big lift in her short stint in Malacañang.

"We are here to show our support for her because of what she has done for the entertainment industry for the past three years. All of us who are here believe what the President can do for us," Del Rosario told the INQUIRER.

MR. SUAVE Bong Revilla

VAL HANDUMON

MOBBED: Action star, Pampanga Gov. Lito Lapid.

VAL HANDUMON

Del Rosario said the affair also showed who among the entertainers will be supporting FPJ, and those who will rally behind Ms Macapagal. He added that although they were only invited to attend the signing of the bill, he and some producers initiated the move to gather support for the President from their sector.

Asked if the event finally broke the FPJ myth, he said: "Yes. I guess so. Of course you cannot expect everybody to support him. Many of us want the President to continue what she has done and started."

He noted that the President's initiatives to lower amusement taxes and the heightened campaign against video piracy were the most important programs of Ms Macapagal that have benefited the industry.

Asked if the event was an endorsement of her bid for the presidency, he answered: "Yes. That's why we're here." Del Rosario revealed that last year, they were able to sell over P14.5 million worth of "legitimate" videos. "Before she took office, we were only able to sell around P4 million. Now you see the difference."

However, he stressed that there was nothing personal in his decision to "dump" FPJ in favor of Ms Macapagal. "This is all politics. After the elections, I am sure we'll be working together again," he said.

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GMA launches bid for redemption in Laguna

From page A1

visit proves that," Torres said.

Earlier at a town-hall meeting in Cavinti, Ms Macapagal launched her campaign for a full term by calling attention to her height and her accomplishments as President.

Noting that she had heard someone in the crowd remark on how small she was, she said in Filipino: "That's true. I'm small, which is why I know the feelings and needs of the poor who are sometimes abused and exploited."

Advantage of experience

Later at a forum with some 100 entertainers in attendance, Ms Macapagal urged the crowd to vote for her, De Castro, and the rest of the K-4 ticket, saying that she had the advantage of experience and that all she had achieved were just a down payment.

"In May, I ask all of you, since I have not served a complete term, to give President Gloria together with Vice President Noli and our senatorial candidates a chance to pay the full installment," she said in a speech at the National Arts Center in Mt. Makiling here.

Ms Macapagal recited a litany of her programs—from hybrid rice to infrastructure—and had Philhealth head Francisco Duque distribute health insurance cards to poor folk in Nagcarlan.

Opposition bailiwick

According to Ms Macapagal, she chose Cavinti as her kickoff point not only because 80 percent of the residents are Arroyos but also because it is the highest point of the vote-rich province known to be the bailiwick of the opposition.

"We want to start our campaign on a high ground," she said. "We would like to take the moral, political high ground. We will focus on the platform, not mudslinging."

The President's team was warmly received in Cavinti, where she attended a 9 a.m. Mass concelebrated by five priests at the Parish of the Transfiguration of Our Lord.

Around 500 people filled the church. The solemnity was broken by shrieks from the young and old who were thrilled at the sight of Revilla, Lapid and Sen. Robert Jaworski, as well as of De Castro who came with his wife Arlene.

Chants of "GMA! GMA!" filled the church when Ms Macapagal, dressed in a brown long-sleeved blouse under her white and yellow campaign vest, arrived with a coterie of Cabinet officials and campaign organizers.

Parish priest Rizaldy Punto asked the assembly to applaud the K-4 team.

Like a talk show

From the Mass, Ms Macapagal and De Castro walked to the Burol Elementary School to preside over a town-hall meeting.

Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman, who is in charge of organizing the gatherings, said 200 people had been asked to dialogue with the President. A thousand others milled around the gym.

Inside, the K-4 standard-bearer and her running mate exchanged banter as though they were in a talk show, with De Castro asking Ms Macapagal why she went to Laguna first and what she had done for the province and the country as a whole in her three years as President.

"Why Laguna? Laguna *laging una* (always first)," Ms Macapagal said, adding that the province was first in generating investments as well as in tourism.

De Castro said the team also chose Cavinti for its cold weather. To which she retorted: "So that during the elections, not all would be hotheads."

At the open forum, Ms Macapagal was asked when the salary of teachers would be increased. She said she was waiting for Congress to pass a law, but promised that she would raise the election duty allowance of teachers.

A father carrying his son stricken with cerebral palsy stole the show when he knelt in front of Ms Macapagal, pleading for help.

"We have nothing to eat, so I drew the courage to seek help," Richard Lintac said in Filipino. *(See story on Page A2.)*

Estrada country

From Cavinti, the caravan proceeded to the towns of Pagsanjan (where ousted President Joseph Estrada traces his roots and where his nephew, character actor ER Ejercito, is the incumbent mayor), Sta. Cruz, Los Baños and San Pedro.

Los Baños Mayor Caesar Perez said the K-4 campaign kickoff in the province would "surely translate to greater benefits for the people of Laguna once the President wins in the elections."

Sta. Rosa resident Andy Jose said he woke up early and took a two-hour ride to Los Baños to hear the K-4 platform of government. He said he was particularly interested in listening to what De Castro had to say.

"We've been hearing negative stories about him," Jose said. "I want to know if he really knows about governance."

A male resident of Cavinti, who asked not to be named, said opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. was the man to beat in the town.

But a businesswoman in Pangil, who also requested anonymity, said Ms Macapagal was "still the best choice."

Private funds

K-4 campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor said in a statement that except for the Presidential Security Group contingent, "all resources" used by Ms Macapagal and her team "came from private funds."

Press Secretary Milton Alingod told dzMM radio that the campaign team had made it a point to hire coasters to ferry the government officials who joined Ms Macapagal's sortie in Laguna.

He also said the President would limit her campaign spending within the limits set by the law.

But Defensor said it would occasionally be unavoidable for government vehicles to form part of the K-4 caravan because the President could use her visits to the provinces to push for governance issues.

"[She] is using the campaign trip to personally know the problems besetting her constituents," Defensor said.

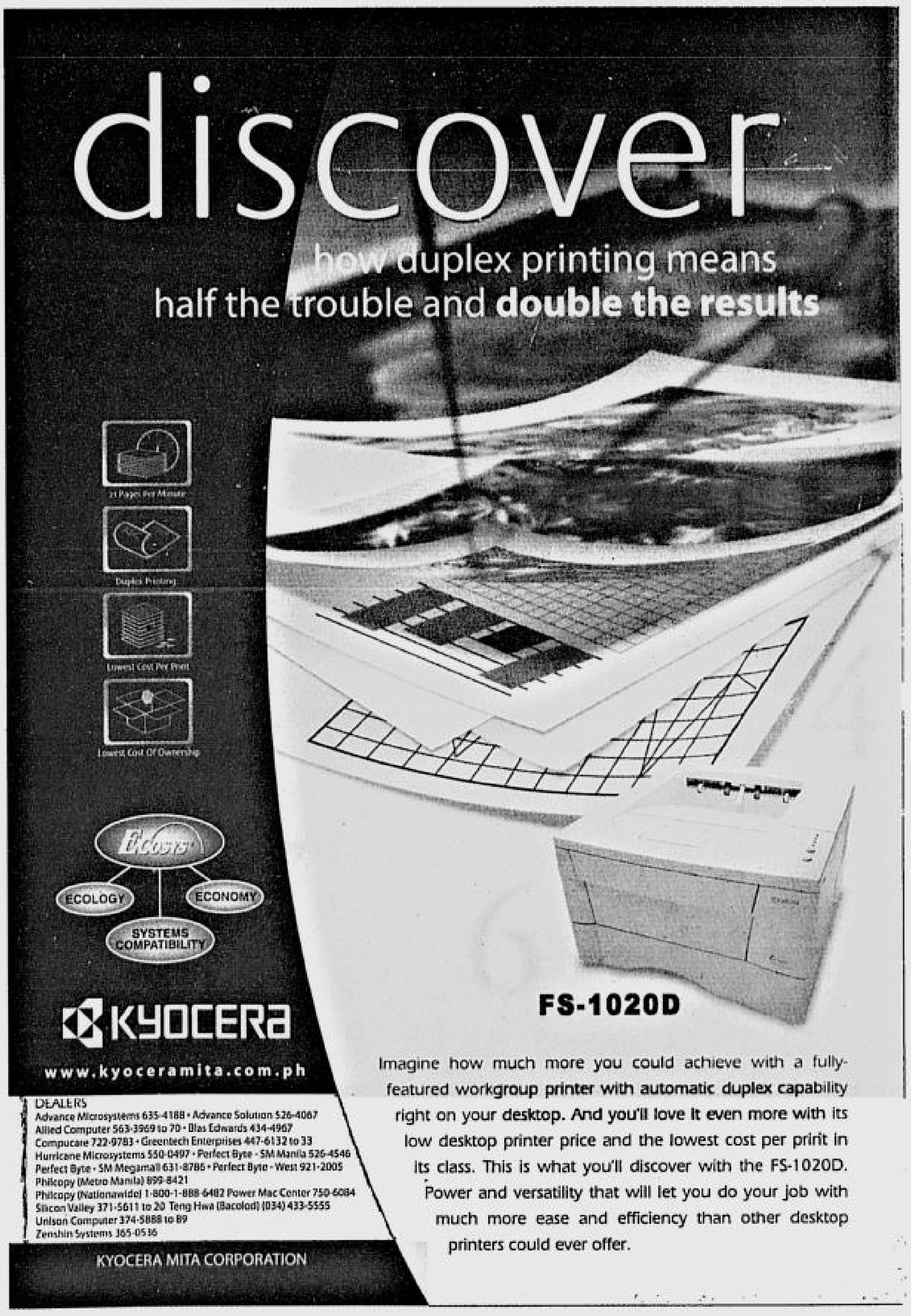
Baguio on Saturday

Ms Macapagal will be in Baguio on Saturday to launch the K-4 campaign in Northern Luzon. The launch will take place after the annual alumni homecoming of the Philippine Military Academy, which she will attend for the first time as President.

Volunteers of the Kaibigan ni Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo have started organizing the Baguio barangays to prepare for the K-4 visit. But this early, critics are campaigning against the ticket.

The Migrante party-list group called on city residents not to vote for Ms Macapagal, saying her policies had helped shape a new overseas welfare program that would disenfranchise more migrant workers.

John Monterona, Migrante vice chair and its second party-list nominee, said his group was planning to wield the so-called OFW (overseas Filipino workers) vote against Ms Macapagal and her allies. ***With reports from Romulo O. Ponte and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Gil Cabacungan Jr. in Manila***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Dolphy, Tito, Vic and Joey, Sex Bomb Dancers . . .

By Carlito Pablo

THE TITO, Vic and Joey triumvirate of the "Eat Bulaga" fame yesterday led the big guns of the entertainment industry in rolling out the program for the kickoff rally of moviedom's king Fernando Poe Jr.

With Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III playing the role of master of ceremonies, brother Vic Sotto and Joey de Leon doing a song number and the wildly famous Sex Bomb Dancers gyrating on stage, it looked like the country's longest running noon-time show did a live show at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City.

As if the Tito, Vic and Joey gig weren't enough, Dolphy, the king of Philippine comedy, went up the stage and endorsed Poe, saying he is making an exception to his rule of staying away from politics.

Dolphy told a delighted crowd that Poe was destined to become the "handsomest President" the country ever had.

"*Nababakla ako* (I'm turning gay)," joked Dolphy, who had played gay roles.

Dolphy took potshots at the opponents of Poe who is facing the prospect of disqualification due to questions about his Filipino citizenship.

"That's why I'm not running for public office, I might be declared a Chinese," Dolphy told the audience.

Sotto introduced Vic and Joey to the crowd, saying the pair has an important message.

When it was his turn to speak, Vic joked: "*Wala lang* (nothing)."

Picking up from there, Joey de Leon said that Poe was a "brother" in the movie industry and asked: "If your brother is running (for elective office), wouldn't you vote for him?"

The duo then proceeded to sing a revised version of Florante's "Ako'y Isang Pinoy (I'm a Filipino)" to the effect that national hero Jose Rizal wants the people to vote for Poe.

Vic and Joey then passed the microphone to actor Eddie Garcia, who after a brief spiel, introduced Poe's spouse, actress Susan Roces.

Dressed in a dark orange dress and pants, Roces said she and Poe were embarking on a new challenge, which is politics, but only because of the people's clamor for Poe to run for President.

In an interview after the program, former Sen. Leticia Ramos-Shahani, who had left the camp of President Macapagal-Arroyo to support Poe, said she saw nothing wrong in the entertainment-heavy rally.

"We Filipinos like to be entertained," she said.

Shahani said the rally proved that actors and entertainers were "good communicators," which she noted was important if one was to reach out to the people.

PIMENTEL
RASUL
FPJ at Loren

"DA King" of comedy, Dolphy essays a speech for his colleague. EDWIN BACASMAS

"EAT, Bulaga" mainers Vic Sotto and Joey de Leon sing their hearts out for FPJ. EDWIN BACASMAS

Poe defines RP problem: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

From page A1

stage and dozens of multi-colored spotlights danced over the set, which resembled a huge television production.

Security was tight, with bodyguards from Poe's production company pushing and shoving a path through the crowd for the candidate and his actor wife Susan Roces.

Poe, who is loved by many poor Filipinos for portraying action hero roles avenging the downtrodden, mounted the stage through a cloud of white smoke wearing blue jeans and an open-necked white shirt.

Breakfast, lunch, dinner

He reduced into three words what he believed was the biggest problem facing Filipinos today: "breakfast, lunch and dinner."

Blaming the government for failing to "take care and defend the poor," the standard-bearer of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino spoke of the need to address poverty now.

"Poverty is the biggest scandal in the country," he said in a 12-minute extemporaneous speech, his longest so far since he announced his candidacy last November.

"A foreigner asked me what was the biggest problem facing Filipinos every day and I told him it was breakfast, lunch and dinner," Poe said.

He said investors were shying away from the country and people were losing trust in the police and the military and were leaving for jobs abroad because of the culture of corruption and influence.

What the country needs now, he said, was a leadership that "applies the rule of law, has political will, inspires confidence and not fear, practices total transparency and is answerable to the people."

People always dream of a "better tomorrow" and this can be turned into reality if people work for it, the opposition presidential candidate said.

"I can't do this alone. I will lead you but I need you," Poe said.

He reminded the audience that "it was about time we go for it, that we do it for our country."

Platform

Poe said he considered his bid for the presidency an "assignment to our people, our country and to our God."

But he did not say how the problems could be solved. Neither did he spell out his platform of government.

Later in the afternoon, his media bureau released a statement outlining his platform, which Poe called a "social covenant" anchored on "trust and confidence."

"*Sama-sama, tulong tulong sa pagpapanday ng bagong umaga,*" was how Poe summed up this social covenant, using a term from his popular "Ang Panday" (blacksmith) movie series.

In the statement, Poe outlined his program of government:

- Restore public trust and confidence in government by depoliticizing top level appointments in the executive branch, judiciary and military, by conducting an in-depth review of the proposals to shift from the presidential to the parliamentary form of government and from the unitary to the federal set up, and by ensuring total transparency in government transactions and requiring public disclosure through the media and Internet.
- Provide the minimum basic needs of every Filipino by increasing funding for rural infrastructure, by reorganizing the police force, by establishing a one-time education fund to wipe out shortages in textbooks and classrooms and by expanding health insurance coverage to include 90 percent of the population by 2007.
- Ensure better fiscal management and a government that lives within its means by carrying out drastic cost-cutting measures on non-essential expenditures and by carrying out bold tax reforms to improve revenue collections.
- Protect vulnerable sectors like farmers and workers by creating a special fund for farmers, by launching a nationwide employment program and by directing the social security system to grant special loans for displaced workers;
- Provide equal opportunities for every Filipino by setting up a one-stop shop to simplify business registration processes; and
- Balancing conflicting interests for the common good by implementing a national peace policy and reaching out to rebel groups and by establishing a grievance mechanism for the military's rank and file, among others.

Idol

"We are for him because we always see him in movies. He is my idol," said hot dog vendor Alan Avila, wearing an FPJ sticker as he sang along to a song hailing the movie star as the great hope for a new dawn in the country.

Stage directors, production staff and television crews with cue cards hurled instructions to Poe's 12 senatorial candidates who waved and danced as they were ushered in to make supportive speeches.

Poe is taking a path that has already been blazed by his great friend and fellow movie star Joseph Estrada—who was elected president in 1998 only to be deposed by a military-backed popular revolt three years later.

Screaming fans

Outside the stadium, fans arrived by the busload, snarling traffic on Roxas Boulevard. Schoolgirls in uniforms lined the sidewalk waving small FPJ flags and screamed every time they caught a glimpse of their idol.

Poe's campaign manager, Sen. Vicente Sotto, said the opposition had planned the show weeks ahead of schedule and kept it under wraps to prevent President Macapagal-Arroyo's camp from copying it.

"This is star power. It's the candidate, the person," Sotto said. "He has a very good chance of winning. The chances are excellent."

Poe started the first day of his campaign by attending a Mass at the chapel of San Beda College in Mendiola, Manila, where he spent his grade school years. He was joined by his running mate Sen. Loren Legarda and the KNP's senatorial lineup. *With a report from AFP*

Roco launches Pag-asa drive with flower power

From page A1

porters after the Mass.

With Roco and his running mate, former Tarlac Rep. Herminio Aquino at the center, the Alyansa senatorial candidates—broadcaster Jay Sonza, lawyers Frank Chavez, Nicanor Gatmaytan, Melanio "Batas" Mauricio and Perfecto Yasay Jr., former food administrator Edno Joson, and bowling champ Bong Coo—emerged from the villa in a V formation to symbolize an arrow.

Like an arrow

"We wanted the flying formation of geese; we propose to be an arrow that will break the campaign of the other tickets," Roco said.

He stressed that he and his team attended the Mass to seek, not an endorsement, but "pastoral blessings" from Sin, whom he described as an "old friend."

"Today, we seek the help of the Lord," he said. "There was nothing political in the Mass."

When asked why they sought blessings from Sin, and not from Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, Roco said: "Remember that there was a pastoral letter by Rosales that the Church should not be political. We respect that."

'JC-JC-Ga-Bay'

From the villa, the Alyansa team motored to the Jose Rizal University on Kalentong Street, where they distributed flowers to kindergarten and grade school students who had gathered in front of the school since 8 a.m.

"This is flower power," Roco said.

They were greeted with applause and wild cheers as they jostled their way through the main hall of the school. Later, the children chanted, "Roco, Roco, Roco" as the presidential candidate flashed the "I love you" sign.

"When you get home, tell your parents to vote for Roco and Aquino, and JC-JC-Ga-Bay," Roco told the crowd, referring to the initials of his senatorial candidates.

The candidates then walked toward the adjoining high school and college buildings, where they pressed hands with a larger crowd of students.

They next stopped by the wet market along Nueve de Febrero Street, walking through its narrow, dingy alleys and over a creek to shake hands with mostly female vendors.

They proceeded to the food court of SM Megamall (Building B) to have lunch with their supporters, mostly youngsters clad in red T-shirts and calling themselves "Roco's Youth Army."

"We dedicate this campaign to the young and the poor. We need their participation and they must be empowered," Roco said. "We want to send the message to them that we are trying hard to serve them, and we are [seeking] their help."

Out of the box

Roco said his team's mode of campaigning was entirely different from the rest.

"It's out of the box. We're trying to demonstrate that talent and knowledge can win this campaign. It's the people's talent, not money. It's the people's concern, it's the people's sacrifice," said, adding:

"Glitter is like tinsel; it's not real. The people are real. You can feel how the people cry, walk, and talk. That's real."

Asked if he and his team would resort to singing and dancing to court votes, Roco said: "There are occasions when you must dance and sing. But to make the dancing and the singing the focus of the campaign without a message, without a platform, then you should just be a singer or dancer."

To the question of whether he felt that luck was on his side in his second stab at the presidency, Roco said: "The people have matured...

"The thesis of the campaign is that if the Filipino people will support it, then we will win. You see, the Filipino people are worth living for; we are betting on that."

Here and there

Sonia Roco was with her husband when he and the rest of the Alyansa slate emerged from the Villa San Miguel.

She was there greeting the children at the Jose Rizal University, but she disappeared in a sea of people when the team trooped to the Nueve de Febrero public market.

She re-emerged at the SM Megamall where Roco and the rest of the team were having lunch with Roco's Youth Army.

Upon seeing his wife, Roco gave his plate to her and offered her *laing*, the famous Bicolano dish.

From there the couple parted ways, with the team proceeding to a meeting with residents of depressed areas in Caloocan City.

Sonia rejoined her husband at the Quezon Memorial Circle for a prayer vigil.

No stranger to politics

The mother of six rarely shows up at her husband's political activities.

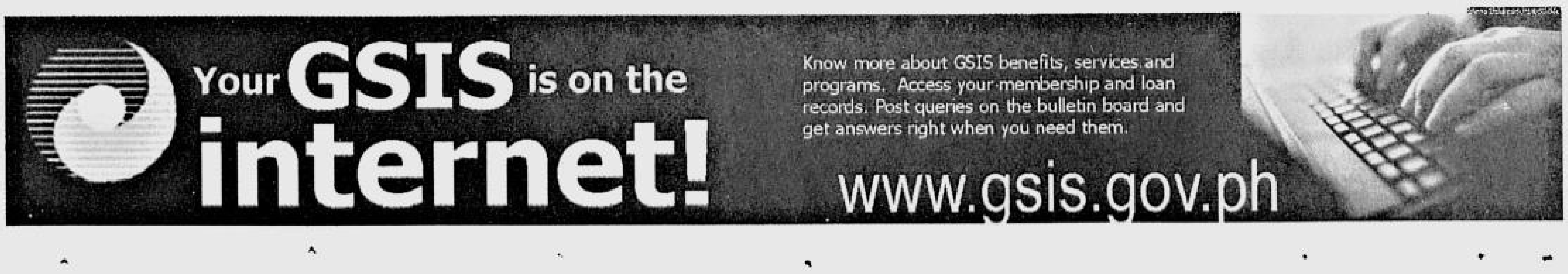
But she is no stranger to politics, being the daughter of ex-Rep. Pablo Malasarte of Bohol.

Sonia trained in speech and drama in London, and when she returned to the country, taught and acted in, directed and produced musicals and plays.

She chairs the Metro Manila Community Orchestra and St. Michael's Hospice Foundation, is a member of the Women in Nation Building, and a past president of Senate Spouses Foundation.

She is co-founder of Our School, a center for early childhood education of the Ateneo psychology department, and the Live and Learn Pre-school at Loyola Heights in Quezon City.

The Rocos were given the Golden Parents Award in 1995 by the Golden Mother and Father Foundation Inc.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Transport groups vs 'kotong'

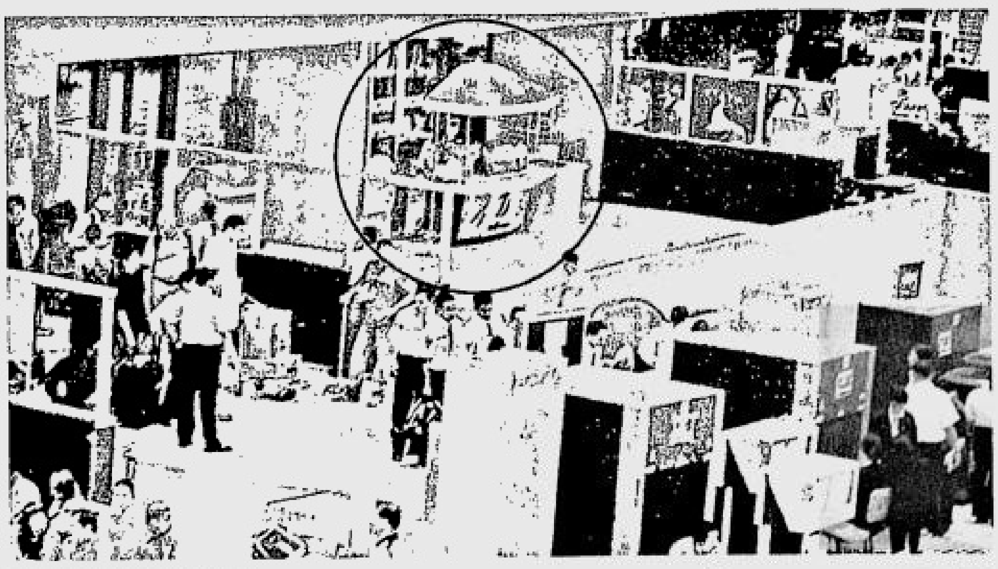
By Tina Santos

THE NATIONAL Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) believes transport groups would become effective agents against corrupt policemen.

Ricardo de Leon, NCRPO director, said the transport sector in the metropolis would greatly help in the campaign against "kotong" cops since they know who are directly extorting money from their members.

De Leon said he was particularly enlisting the help of different drivers' associations of public utility buses, such as the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association (Fejodap) and the Integrated Metro Bus Operators Associations (IMBOA).

Jomari drags Aiko to court anew



ROGER MANGALLO

BACK IN BUSINESS
A food stall (encircled), which was removed from the NAIA Departure Area after the INQUIRER published its picture last month due to passenger complaints, is back in business.

By Tina Santos

FOR ALLEGEDLY preventing him from visit their son, actor Jomari Yllana has asked the Quezon City Regional Trial Court to cite his estranged actress-wife Aiko Melendez for indirect contempt.

In a petition, Yllana, Jose Maria Yllana in real life, claimed that Melendez refused to comply with the court decision granting him the right to visit his son during weekends at reasonable hours of the day.

Records showed that on June 12, 2003, QC-RTC Judge Abednego Adre granted Melendez's petition to annul her marriage with Yllana.

In the decision, Adre granted Melendez sole custody of their son, while he gave Yllana visitation rights.

In his complaint, Yllana cited an incident in December 2003 when Melendez prevented him from visiting their son at the actress' house.

"You will never see your son again. It is up to me if you want to see our son," Yllana quoted Melendez as saying.

The actor also denied the statement of Melendez in a television interview that he had not been giving financial support to their child.

He stressed that the lack of financial support should never be a ground to prevent him from exercising his visitation rights "even assuming for the sake of argument that the accusation of Melendez is true."

Yllana further claimed that the act of Melendez of claiming sole authority in determining when he would be allowed to visit and see his son was clearly contrary to the decision of the court.

Melendez, who was busy at the City Council, was unavailable for comment.

METRO BRIEFS

Ambush

PO2 FELIX Tan of the Valenzuela City police Anti-carnapping Unit survived a shootout the other afternoon in what police officials believed was an ambush attempt. Tan suffered a gunshot wound in the belly. The suspects remain at large. At 3 p.m. Monday, Tan was driving his motorcycle along Gen. T. De Leon when one of two men shot him near Demetillo Street. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

Recaptured

ANOTHER prisoner who bolted the Rodriguez, Rizal, municipal jail has surrendered Monday afternoon. Ferdie Orbino, who faces drug charges, turned himself in to Mayor Pedro Cuerpo at about 4 p.m. at the municipal town hall. This brought the number of recaptured inmates to four. Last week, authorities recaptured Alexander Guillermo, Lenilo Egos and Derius Zafra. Yesterday, Cuerpo turned over Orbino to the custody of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology. Orbino was among the 15 inmates who escaped the town jail on Feb. 4. *Luige del Puerto*

Run over

AN ELECTRICIAN died after being run over by a speeding cab at dawn yesterday in Marikina City. The police identified the victim as Reynaldo Tolentino, stay-in electrician of Wow Restaurant in Barangay Nayong, Antipolo City. Tolentino suffered severe head injuries and failed to make it to the hospital. A witness, taxi driver Marcelino Bernas, said Tolentino was crossing Gil Fernando Street when the taxi (TVU 279) hit him. The taxi that ran over the victim quickly fled after the incident. Bernas and his passenger, Eden Cayabyab, rushed the victim to Amang Rodriguez Hospital. *Luige del Puerto*

Magdalo arraignment reset for 6th time

By Margaux Ortiz

THE MAKATI Regional Trial Court postponed for the sixth time the arraignment of 31 junior military officers accused of leading the July 2003 failed coup d' etat against the Macapagal administration.

Judge Oscar Pimentel reset the arraignment to March 2 after asking the defense lawyers to first settle their pending motions, including motion to set bail and motion to assume jurisdiction over the crimes charged, before the court.

Defense lawyer Roel Pulido is also claiming that records from the court of Judge Romeo Barza, who initially presided over the case, had some mistakes and inaccuracies.

Pimentel said that his court would not entertain any more postponements next month.

The military officers, led by Lt. (s.g.) Antonio Trillanes IV and Capt. Gerardo Gambala, wore civilian clothes for a change, with red ribbons of protest tied around their arms.

The deferred arraignment was held at the session hall of the old Makati city hall to accommodate the accused, their relatives and court staff.

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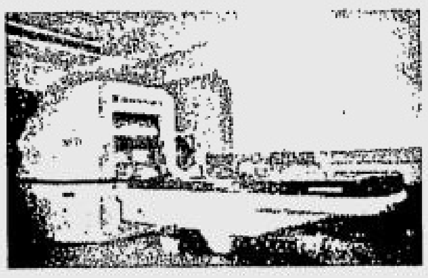

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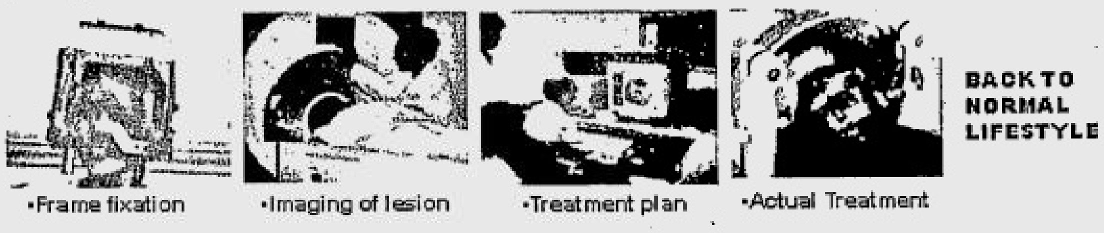
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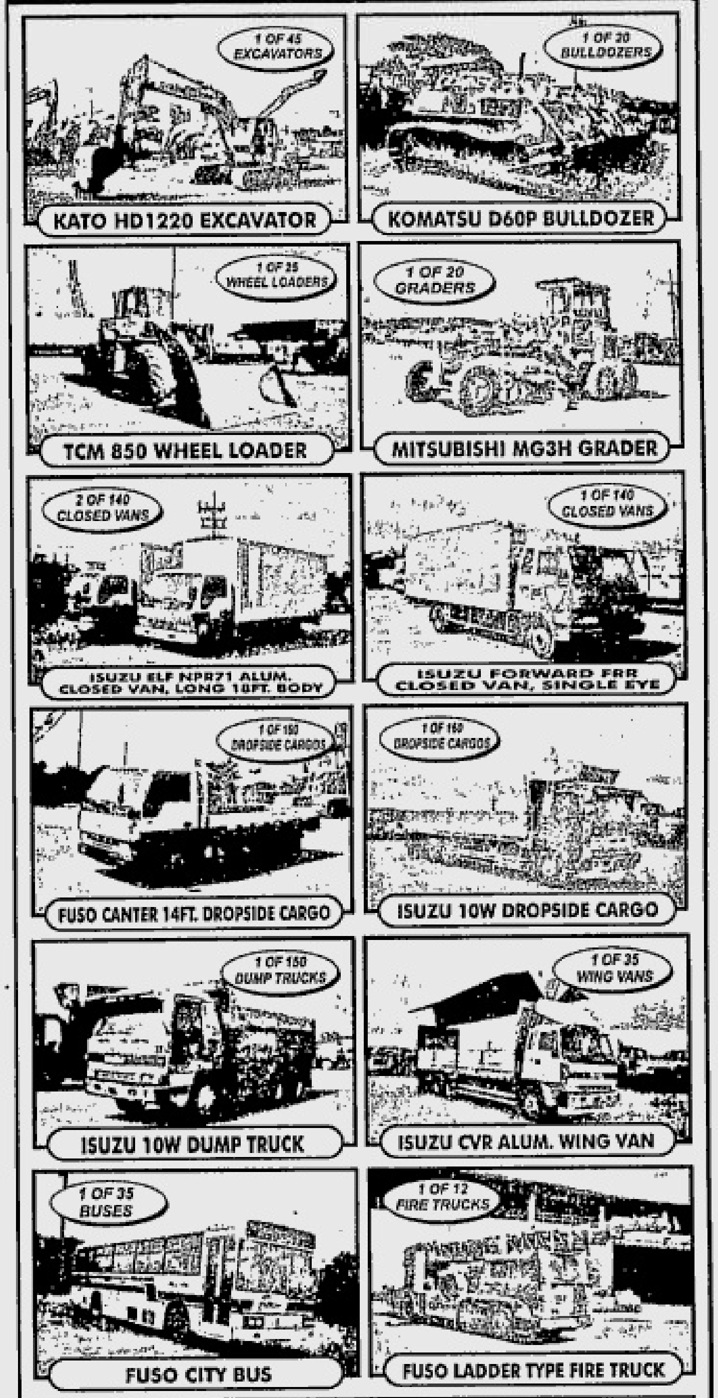
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FUSO CANTER 14FT. DROPSIDE CARGO
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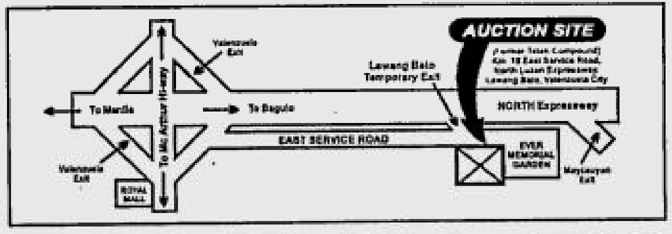
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6/42 Luzon
2 4 9 16 18 31

Vis-Min
13 16 24 25 35 42

Exploding truck kills 2 in Manila

By Leila B. Salaverria

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Meanwhile, 22-year-old Elisa Batoy and an unidentified 12-year-old boy were hurt and taken to the Gat Andres Bonifacio Hospital for treatment.

The blaze also damaged P250,000 worth of property and reached the third alarm.

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The two injured were rescued by firefighters and concerned citizens.

Aside from the victims' house, the blaze also damaged two adjacent shanties.

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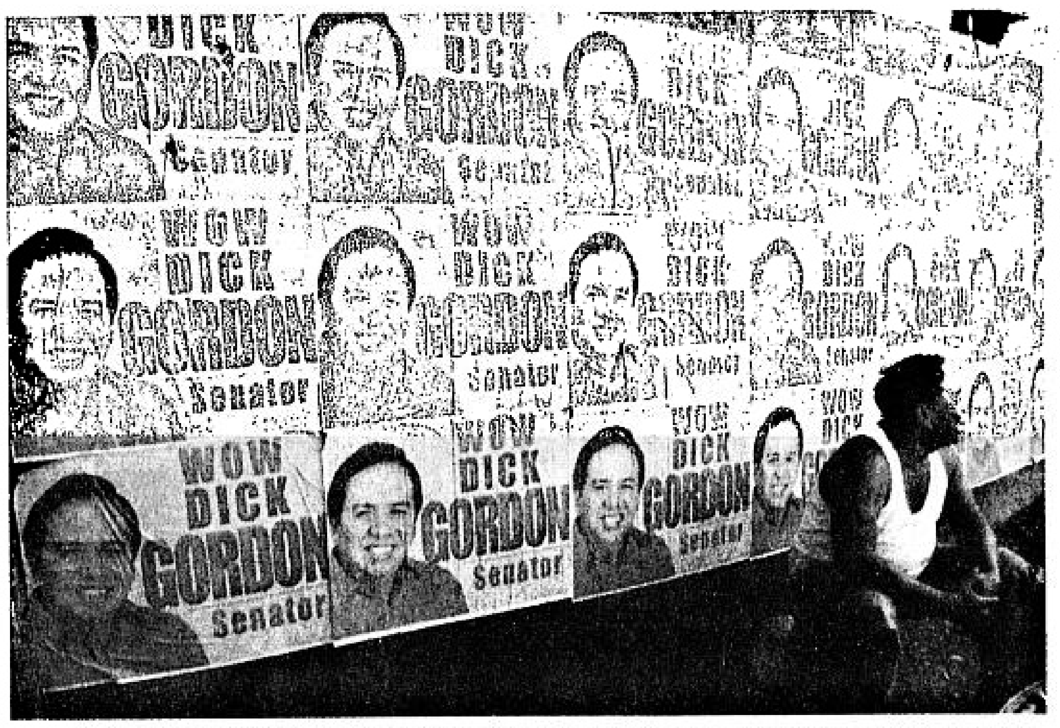
NATIONAL CAMPAIGN STARTER

Lawmen told to stay neutral



SUPPORTERS of administration senatorial candidate Richard Gordon beat rivals in the race for this wall along Anonas Street in Quezon City, which they fill with their bet's posters. JOAN BONDOC

By Edson Tandoc Jr. and Luige del Puerto

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But how about if a policeman really feels strongly about a certain candidate?

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"If some policemen would want to openly support a certain candidate, they should better take a leave or resign first," Franco told the INQUIRER earlier.

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"Heckling could lead to trouble. So please, avoid it," Valenzuela said, adding, "Filipinos are very passionate about their beliefs. So when engaged in a debate, keep your voice down and your tempers cool."

Busy with winning votes, FPJ snubs suit

By Tarra Quismundo

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Noro thus reset the hearing to Feb. 17.

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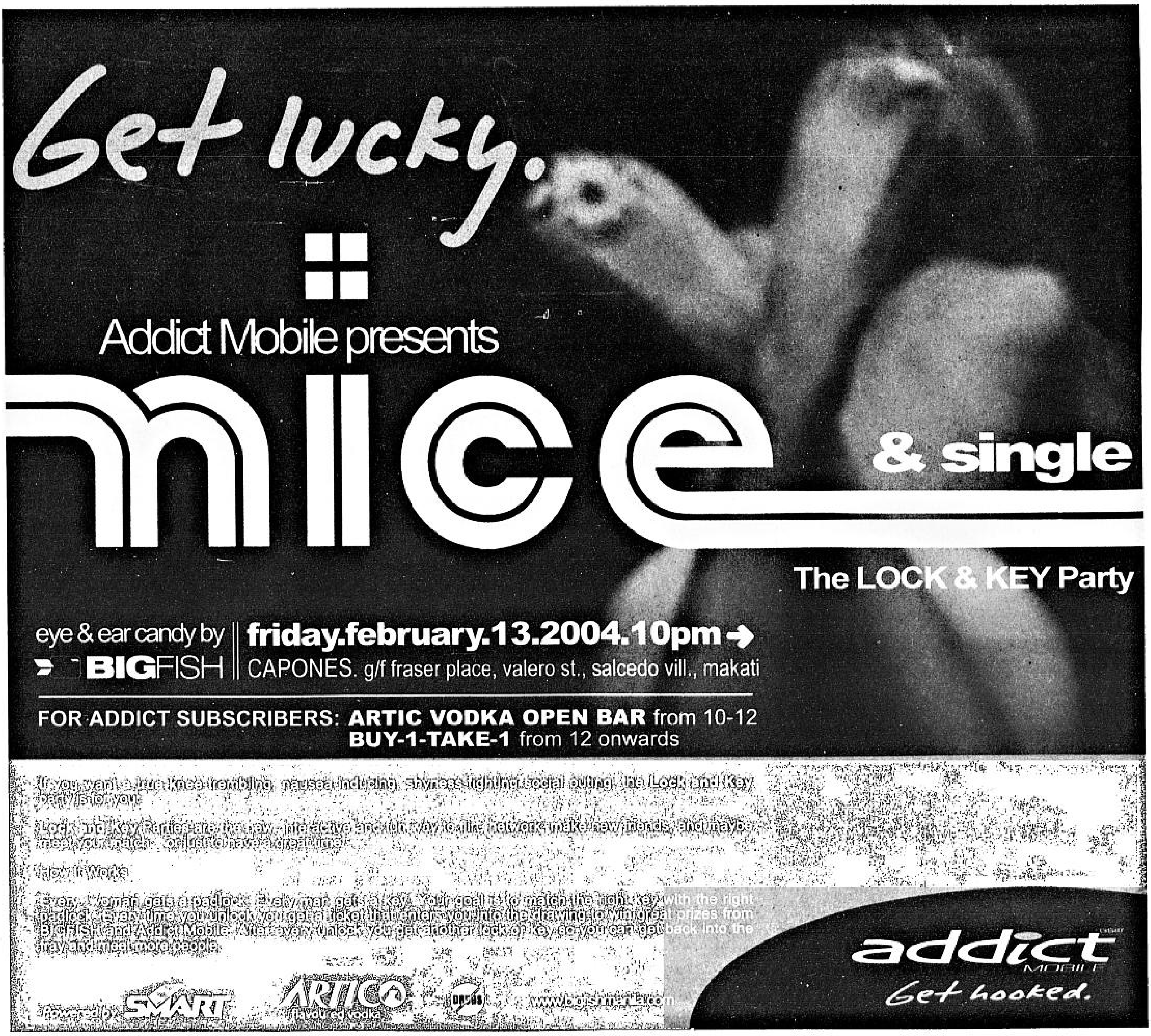
POE



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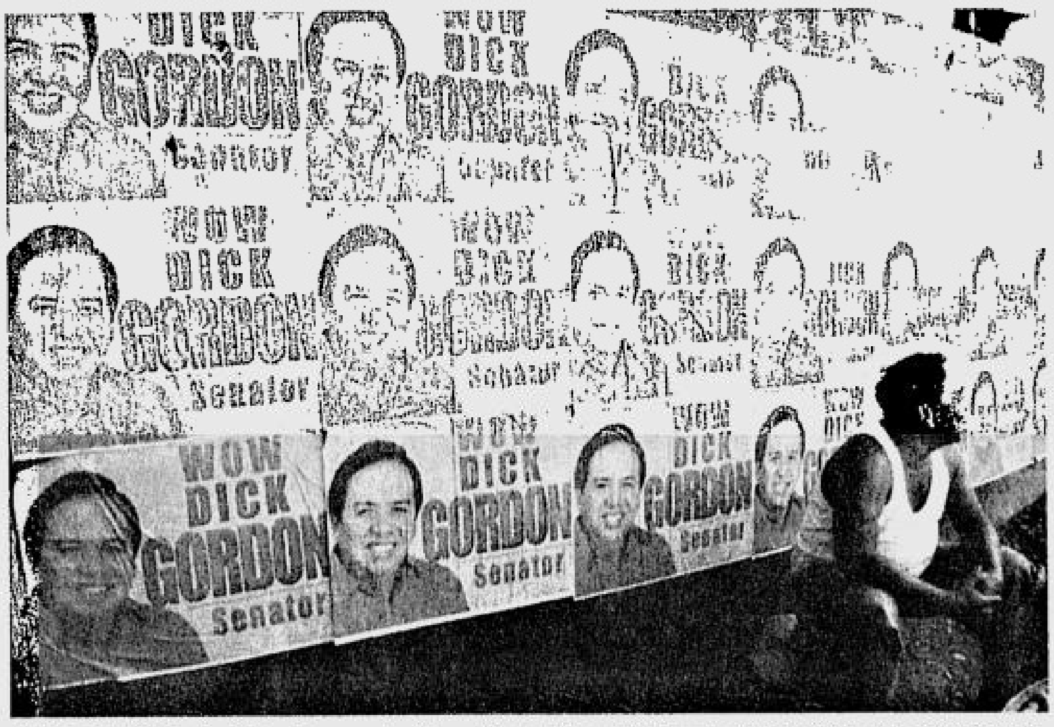

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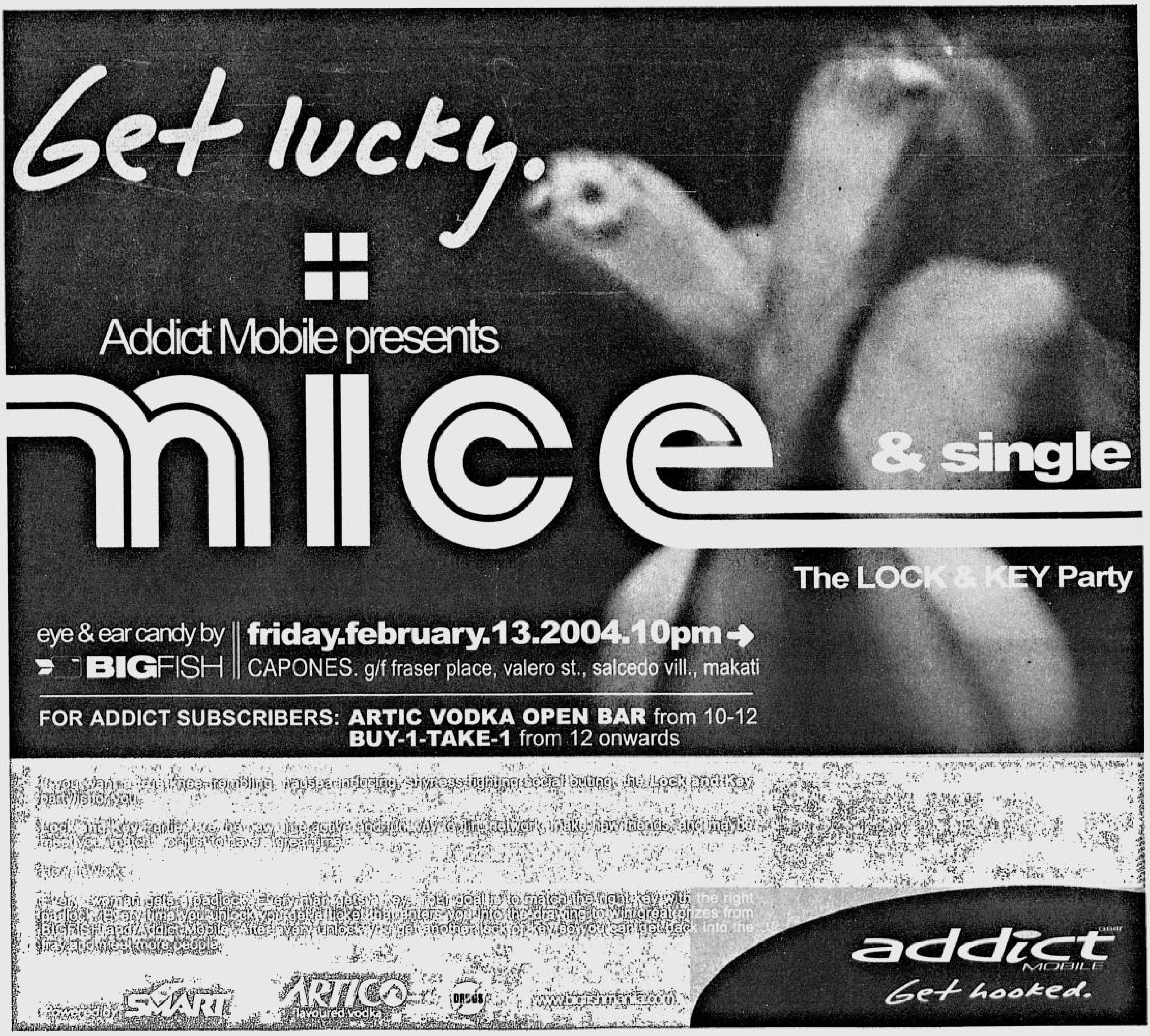

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SPORTS

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SPORTS TV

BASKETBALL: NBA Greatest Games - 1995 All-Star Game: 8:30 a.m.; Solar Sports - Mitch Richmond is named MVP after scoring 23 points in 22 minutes off the bench. Rookie Grant Hill is the first to start the game since Shaquille O'Neal in 1993.

NBA - Jazz vs Blazers; 11 a.m.; Solar Sports - Utah meets Portland in the Rose Garden.

TENNIS: 2004 Watsons Walter Championships; 2:30 p.m.; Solar Sports - Check out spectacular singles and doubles tennis action.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Compiled by L. Manguiat

Dayrit backs oust-Buhain move

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ALL'S not well in Philippine sports.

A day after the dialogue between the Philippine Sports Commission and national sports associations, Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit yesterday openly declared—for the first time— he's pursuing the move to oust PSC chair Eric Buhain.

BUHAIN: PSC has limited funds.

DAYRIT: NSAs have real problems.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Dayrit said he had even endorsed the petition letter signed by 13 NSA heads to Malacañang last Friday in the hope of getting President Macapagal-Arroyo to act against Buhain.

"But it's not the question of numbers," he said. "The fact remains that these NSAs have presented real problems that should be addressed."

The POC is the umbrella organization of all national sports associations. It is the local extension of the International Olympic Committee.

The submission of the petition paper to Malacañang came even before the PSC-NSAs dialogue on Monday. The petition lamented Buhain's alleged lack of "wisdom and sincerity" to lead the PSC.

Dayrit said the NSAs have only two issues that they want solved: To get their receivables from the PSC—some of them dating back to the 2002 Busan Asian Games— and for the agency not to push through with the plan to reduce the number of athletes in the national pool.

Still, Dayrit expressed doubts, however, that President Arroyo was able to read, much less act on, the petition letter, considering that the election campaign period has already started.

"Dialogues won't amount to anything unless the PSC does something about it," said Dayrit who was also present during Monday's gathering of at least 22 NSA heads.

Just the same, some NSA heads expressed satisfaction over the result of the meeting, including one of the signatories, Rey Jaylo of judo.

"Chairman Buhain is okay so far," said Jaylo. "But this is an eye-opener, they (PSC) accepted their mistakes, let's see if they can rectify it.'"

Jaylo also added that the NSAs understood PSC's financial woes.

"But we have to keep on working, though the bottomline is that the PSC has no money," said Jaylo. "They (PSC) looked sincere to me. I'm sure they will find ways."

Frank Elizalde, the country's representative to the IOC, also spoke during the meeting and declared that "taking Buhain out of the PSC is not the solution" and that the funding problem is shared by the PSC, POC and the NSAs.

Riviera saves Open given up by Mimosa

By Jong Arcano

THE WORST fear of the National Golf Association of the Philippines happened yesterday when the top honcho of the Mimosa Golf and Country Club admitted the Angeles City course was not ready to host the DHL-Philippine Open golf championship.

But the 88th edition of the Open is definitely pushing through on Feb. 26-29 after the Riviera Golf and Country Club came to its rescue.

The assurance came from NGAP president Rod Feliciano who had tried to avert the cancellation of the event at Mimosa the past two days to no avail.

"We've decided to transfer the venue of the Philippine Open in view of the fact that Dr. Emmanuel Angeles of Clark Development Corp., which manages Mimosa, has told me of their decision not to host the event anymore," Feliciano told the INQUIRER.

Angeles, president of CDC, talked with Feliciano on the phone and relayed the decision of the club's five-man executive committee that Mimosa is no longer interested in the Open *(See separate story)*.

Feliciano was also told of the prevailing sentiment at Mimosa after the club absorbed a barrage of negative publicity and criticism from NGAP secretary general Benny Gopez.

"Mr. Angeles told me that the Mimosa excom didn't like what they've been reading in the papers and cannot meet the many requirements of the NGAP," Feliciano said.

As soon as Angeles waived Mimosa's right to host, the NGAP wasted no time going to the next available option, which was Riviera since it had the facilities in place for the tournament.

Thus, the Open is going back to the par-71 Langer course of Riviera, where Gerald Rosales won the Open in 2000. Riviera first hosted the Open in 1998 when Frankie Miñoza won at the adjacent Couples course.

Feliciano signed the hosting contract with Riviera president Commodore Danny Pizarro in a hastily arranged meeting last night at The Fort.

Pizarro said it's an honor for Rivera to be able to host the Open again.

FAVORED LAYOUT: Rosales will return to Riviera. PDI PHOTO

Not entirely our fault, says CDC's Angeles

MOST unfair.

This was the pained reaction of Clark Development Corp. president Emmanuel Angeles yesterday to criticisms that Mimosa was unfit to host the Philippine Open when everybody knew the limited resources it can offer.

ANGELES

"I think the comments against us should not have been made, much more blown up in the media. If they didn't want our facilities then we should have talked it over and transferred it quietly to another club," said Angeles.

The CDC took over the operations of Mimosa in 1999 after the company of Tony Gonzales failed to remit its financial obligations to the government. Though it started out as world-class resort in its first few years of operation, Mimosa was already in a deteriorating state by the time CDC came in.

The NGAP decision to choose Mimosa as Open host also took a lot of golfers by surprise considering that there were quite a number of offer from clubs with better facilities.

"We we're bent on hosting it until they made it appear that we're not doing anything and started belittling us. That's not fair," Angeles said.

Angeles also said the NGAP changed the date of the Open from Feb. 4-5 without their knowledge and also abruptly transferred the venue from the Mountain View to the Acacia-Lakeview combine.

"To avoid the embarrassment they are talking about, we decided to give up the Open for the good of everybody. It's not entirely our fault because we wanted to cooperate," he said.

Angeles added that CDC had promised support based on its limited resources.

No less than Tiger Woods underscored Mimosa's stature as one of the country's top courses when he played there late in the '90s. *Jong Arcano*

PBA returning from a serious fracture

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

(**ANGER & AGONY:** No way to take back what had been written here last time. That explanatory column on my son Chino has received approval and congratulations. Unfortunately, that text message that wondered if it was proper for a parent to ask rich friends to buy a son's paintings had hurt a few sensitive souls. As a result, I got at least three protesting text replies from different persons, plus one scathing call from an angered mother. Art, noble as it is, could be peddled any which way the artist wants it sold. I realized that column could have stood without using that text message. I'd been too proud. I offer my sincere apologies for the undue agony I had caused.)

***

IT did not get knocked out in the previous season, but neither was 2003 a win-win year for the PBA.

Now, after barely surviving last year, the PBA is raring to score a big win.

It need not be told, but the pro league cannot afford another lethargic performance.

Indeed, it's going all out in a frantic bid to regain original fame and following.

This should explain the hustle and bustle around the PBA offices.

"If it fails again, then there might be no way to stop it from sinking," said one tried and tested PBA father who took charge in one of the league's glorious periods.

***

Well, there's not much noise, unlike when Malacañang prepared for the state visit of US President George Bush last year.

But the quiet intensity is somewhat electrifying.

No need to ask Commissioner Noli Eala, a born fighter.

The glint in his cat eyes says it all.

He won't be satisfied with a mere comeback.

His aim is to shoot up, up, up.

***

Oh, forget the pessimist claim that Pinoy devotees have started to get tired of basketball.

Give them a good match and they would all come running to the coliseum.

Proof was that Philippine Basketball League championship rubber match at the Philsports arena in Pasig last Saturday.

The monumental attendance that had all parking spaces taken all the way to the edge of the forbidden motel row was testament enough of the undying passion for basketball hereabouts.

Is there a way the PBA could borrow and transport the intensity of the Fash-Welcoat rivalry to the pro league backyard?

***

First, the PBA must try to fathom the success of the PBL with the crowd.

It did not happen overnight.

For starters, there's word from the sage that could be heeded.

Coach Baby Dalupan has advised that the PBA should strive to develop deep, passionate rivaly between two distinct clubs.

You know, like the fabled Crispa-Toyota grudge of old that had fueled tribal differences deep into the kitchens of both poor and rich households.

***

Again, no need to stress that this should also be a season of healing for the PBA.

But in order to get over the sticky hangover of the drug mess, the Fil-Sham brouhaha and other afflictions, the PBA need not start as though it has just stepped out of the ICU.

"We go out there with a bang," declared Dave Coros, a reliable mainstay at the PBA information office.

Coros, formerly of the Manila Daily Bulletin, confided that there's now an upgrading not only of league format, but of the office system and personnel as well.

Sta. Lucia's Buddy Encarnado, PBA chair of the board, in tandem with Commissioner Eala, has been working hard, overtime to streamline practically everything within league confines.

***

Majority of the games will be played at the Araneta Coliseum, the league's original mecca.

But expected to again perk up PBA popularity is the reformatted television coverage.

The idea is to have the PBA on television every day of the week, Coros confided.

Of course, there will only be three official game days, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday.

Out-of-town matches will be done Thursday.

But Coros said plans are afoot to have primetime PBA exposure on other days by showing great games and other heartwarming packages.

***

Yes, all told, the PBA is clearly plotting to wean the *bakya* crowd from the more dominant late-day telenovelas.

This is the main reason behind the all-out offensive the pro league has decided to take for its fresh season set to start Feb. 22.

But hold it. More than offense, the Big D, defense, should form the core of the PBA's new, vigorous thrust.

The pro league must strive to play the Bobby Jaworski-type of defense to guard against lethargy.

By this, we mean pros must play like manly pros, unafraid to spill their guts.

You see, the PBA suffered a serious fracture last year mainly due to the refusal of players to bang it hard. Instead, they tried sissy ways to preserve their limbs while in battle.

The often result was shallow, invalid theater.

The pampered, overpaid stars avoided injury and at the same time succeeded in fattening their bank books.

The league, itself fractured, got crippled.

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Angolans out; Eala still mum on Torion fate

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball Association is looking for another foreign team to join an Australian squad in the coming PBA Fiesta Conference after the Angolan national team begged off yesterday.

PBA Operations chief Rickie Santos said Angola cited its preparation for the Athens Olympics in declining the league's invitation.

Angolan officials said the team plans to go to Athens in late May or early June to acclimatize themselves with the cold Olympic weather.

Aside from the club team from Australia, the PBA is trying to get in touch with the New Zealand national team or a champion club from Brazil, Canada, Puerto Rico and Argentina.

Meanwhile, Commissioner Noli Eala said he has yet to act on the request of Batang Red Bull to reinstate playmaker Jimwell Torion.

"It's not yet time. In fact, we haven't talked about it yet. But anything's possible," said Eala.

Torion hit Jimmy Alapag with a clothesline on the face last year that bloodied the Talk 'N Text playmaker's nose, which later needed surgery.

As a result, Torion was slapped a P70,000 fine and an eight-month suspension which will deny the Cebuano point guard at least P2 million in basic salary.

For Alapag, however, everything is now water under the bridge.

"I won't have any problems seeing him on the playing court. He has not apologized personally but I read his remorse all over the papers and I forgive him," said Alapag.

Meanwhile, a rich blend of familiar names and fresh faces will work the ABC-5 coverage of the new season.

Veteran sportscasters Quinito Henson and Ed Picson will head the telecast panel along with Norman Black and TJ Manotoc.

Also in the group are Miko Halili and actor Hans Montenegro. Patricia Bermudez-Hizon will be one of three lady courtside reporters.

"They are expected to express their knowledge of the game and provide entertainment as well," said PBA production director Sienna Olaso of ABC Sports.

In another development, PBA officials complained of the unbearable stench in their office at the Ultra due to lack of water for almost a week now.

An official said the motor pump, which supplies water to the entire building, conked out last week but has yet to be fixed by the Philippine Sports Commission, which is renting the place to the PBA for P100,000 a month.

TOUR DE LANGKAWI

Primero fifth best in Stage 4

MELAKA, Malaysia—Albert Primero gave the Philippines' Pagcor squad something to crow about Monday when he stuck it out with a five-man lead pack of international riders that sustained a daring breakaway in Stage 4 of the 9th Tour de Langkawi.

American Sean Sullivan of Team Barloworld won the 171-km stage with a time of 3 hours, 20 minutes and 15 seconds although the leaderboard was hardly shaken as Freddy Gonzales of Colombia Selle-Italia remained on top.

Primero, a rookie, brought up the rear of the lead group at the finish, unable to match the speed of his rivals, who staged a mad scramble for lap honors in the last few meters.

Sullivan edged Devis Miorin of Italy as lap winner while American Michael Sayers was third in 3:21:20.

Brice Jones, another American, was fourth, finishing five seconds ahead of Primero, who clocked 3:21:27.

Although Primero's heroics did not put him in the top 10 of the Asian classification, he towed Pagcor to a best Asian team finish in the stage.

Pagcor remained fourth place, however, although it trimmed the gap from leaders Japan, Iran and China.

The rest of the RP seven-man team, led by Victor Espiritu, arrived one minute and 29 seconds off the stage winner.

Ryan Tanguilig and Espiritu retained their 8th and 9th rankings, respectively, in the Asian individual race.

Tanguilig trailed by 7 minutes and 49 seconds off Asian leader Ghader Mizbani of Iran.

The riders will get a chance to improve their standings when they race against the clock in Stage 5 Tuesday.

PRIMERO celebrates his victory in the Puerto Princesa Cycling Challenge last Nov. 29. His impressive finish yesterday towed the Philippine riders to the best Asian team finish in Stage 4. PDI PHOTO

Chino no longer sure of leaving

By Trina Ibarle

TRINIDAD

DON'T look now, but it seems Chino Trinidad is having second thoughts of quitting.

Urged to stay on by officials and moved by the successful and dramatic end of the Platinum Cup, Trinidad yesterday said there's a big possibility he would reconsider his decision to step down as commissioner of the Philippine Basketball League.

"I'm reconsidering this since it's no longer just about me, but it's something which will affect the lives of other people," said Trinidad, who announced his resignation at halftime of Game 3 of the Fash Liquid Detergent-Welcoat Paints title series recently.

Trinidad had resented a display of protest by the Welcoat players over the choice of the Most Valuable Player, who fittingly redeemed himself as Fash won the last two games of the best-of-five playoffs to clinch the title

"My resignation was just my reaction because something I have been fighting for has been disregarded. But this is not a reason to quit altogether. I found more reasons to reconsider my decision to resign," said the four-term commissioner.

"It's not just me, but also the players who have dreams to make it big in the PBL. That is more than enough reason for me to return which I have to consider," he added.

The PBL board refused to accept Trinidad's resignation and members of the Welcoat team apologized for slighting the commissioner, who, in turn, accepted their apology wholeheartedly.

"Technically, I'm still resigned. But it seems my resignation was not accepted," said Trinidad, also a veteran sportscaster who is leaving tonight for Los Angeles to cover the National Basketball Association's All-Star Weekend on Feb. 14-16.

He promised to make a decision hopefully before the PBL resumes in March, but stressed that he didn't want to tie the board in deciding his resignation.

"I respect the board and I told them not to let themselves be hostaged by my decision since I am not myself sure how long it would take me (to decide)," said Trinidad.

4 C. de Oro 'Tryouts' teeners shine

By Roy Luarca

CAGAYAN DE ORO City—Four youngsters will get a chance to make their basketball dreams come true after excelling in the inaugural stop of the RP-Cebuana Lhuillier "Tryouts ng Bayan" at the Corpus Christi Gym here.

Ricardo Cawaling Jr., Hyvan Bao, Julian Magare III and Rickmar Pertubos, ages 16-18, were given invitations to study and play for Manila schools after an impressive showing during the tryouts held Monday and Tuesday.

"These are players who have the skills and will to excel, we'll give them a chance to achieve their full potential," said coach Dong Vergeire, who, along with Boyzie Zamar, is supervising the nationwide search for fresh talents for the national basketball team.

Cawaling and Magare, both 16, the 17-year-old Bao and Pertubos, 18, caught the eye of the coaching staff, which also included Beaujing Acot and Arsenio Dysangco, among 70 aspirants who joined the tryouts.

The 6-foot-3 Cawaling, a standout from Liceo de Cagayan, can play both guard positions as well as small forward. His long wingspan makes him an ideal material for international play, the coaches say.

Magare, on the other hand, is a 5-10 point guard who displayed maturity and good judgment in calling the plays.

At 6-2 1/2, Bao mans the slot for the Pilgrim junior team while Pertubos is a beefy 6-4 center from Sacred Heart who had a brief stint with the San Beda Red Cubs.

"This is a fruitful start. I'm sure we'll discover more talents as we go along," said Zamar, referring to the two-month tryouts which will cover key cities in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Apart from the tryouts, the coaching staff and national players Ricky Calimag, Celino Cruz, Richie Melencio and Dennis Madrid also conducted a two-day clinic for players 12-17 years old as part of the Basketball Association of the Philippines' outreach program.

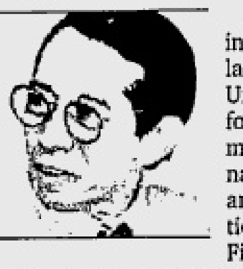
The Tryouts ng Bayan is a brainchild of RP team manager Jean Henri Lhuillier. It is bankrolled by Cebuana Lhuillier in coordination with the BAP.

The RP-Cebuana Lhuillier contingent will leave this bustling city at midnight on the way to Davao City, where the second leg of the Tryouts ng Bayan will be held today.

No less than 70 aspirants are expected to show up at the Almendras Gym for the tryouts starting at 9 a.m.

Despite ban, gov't men patronize cockfights

CLEAN LIVING



Manolo R. Iñigo

THIS much I can say: The directive issued recently by Chief Insp. Florencio Ortilla, Western Police District operations and planning head, ordering WPD police officers to refrain from going to the cockpits, nightclubs and bars is timely, a step in the right direction because of the tarnished image of policemen nowadays.

The memo said that, except in cases where their presence is required in the performance of their duties, police officers found inside the cockpits, nightclubs and bars would be immediately arrested and slapped with grave misconduct charges, while their superiors who fail to carry out the order would also be charged with conduct unbecoming of an officer, or as accessory to the incident.

Methinks the ban should apply not only to police officers but also to other government officials, including those from the graft-ridden Department of Public Works and Highways and the Department of Interior and Local Governments, not to mention the members of Congress whose salaries are being paid for by the long-suffering taxpayers.

Cockfighting or *sabong* is the Filipinos' favorite pastime. But it becomes gambling when some congressmen and provincial governors, including city and municipal mayors and vice mayors, bet thousands of pesos per match during big-time derbies.

Still, there are those who do not consider cockfighting as gambling but more as an honest sport.

"I don't bet much," once said Jorge "Nene" Araneta, dapper owner of the Big Dome and husband to former Miss Universe Stella Marquez of Colombia. "I just love the thrill of breeding a winning game fowl."

***

KUDOS TO COKE GO-FOR-GOAL. This year's champion of the multi-awarded Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football championship would have been known yesterday afternoon at the Sta. Barbara Plaza oval in Iloilo City. However at press time, Negros Occidental's Don Bosco Technical Institute and Masbate Comprehensive National High School were still playing to decide the winner of the 20th edition of this series organized by the Philippine Football Federation and sponsored by the Coca-Cola Export Corp.

Anyway, congrats to whomever wins the title.

More than 400 teams took part this time in the youth-oriented program which was launched in 1984 with 80 teams competing. Under the guidance of lawyer Rene Adad, former PFF president and Philippine branch manager of the Coca-Cola Export Corp., the nationwide program has kept football alive and kicking in the country. Without question, it has touched the lives of thousands of Filipino schoolchildren, most of whom come from poor families and impoverished public schools.

"Coke Go-for-Goal is the living symbol of a truly grassroots development program based on the idea that people even from dramatically diverse backgrounds, whether rich or poor, can play to win and play it fair," said Adad recently. "The program does not promise instant fame or fortune, but it offers a lifetime reward of learning the values of dedication, discipline and sportsmanship."

Through the years, the program has received extensive media coverage and has been consistently cited by the Philippine Sportswriters Association for its contribution to sports. Coca-Cola was cited in particular for it best illustrates a good corporate commitment that other private companies should emulate. The world's leading soft drinks manufacturer, Coca-Cola, is a longtime supporter of sports, dating back to 1928 when it sponsored the Amsterdam Olympic Games.

SPORTSWATCH

3 taekwondo fighters seek Olympic slots

THREE Southeast Asian Games taekwondo gold medalists—Donald David Geisler III, Mary Antoinette Rivero and Margarita Bonifacio—fly to Bangkok today to pursue the Philippines' bid for berths in the Athens Olympics in August, this year. Geisler, a welterweight like the 16-year-old Rivero, is seeking his second Olympic stint, having represented the country together with Roberto Cruz, Eva Marie Ditan and Jasmin Strachan four years ago in Sydney. Rivero and Bonifacio, a heavyweight who bagged a gold medal in last December's Vietnam Southeast Asian Games in the middleweight class, are both hopeful of making it to Athens. "They all have good chances of qualifying," said Philippine Taekwondo Association vice president and delegation head Sung Chon Hong yesterday. Tshomlee Go, a flyweight, has so far made it to Athens, claiming his berth in last December's world qualifying meet in Paris.

'We Built This City' golf tourney today

TWO tournaments—the City Sports Foundation Marikina Inc. (CSFMI) inaugural tourney and the Second President's Cup PCA Mari Valley—will be staged today at the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club course in Quezon City. Tee-of time for the twin events, called "We Built This City" golf tournament and held to raise funds for infra-sports development projects in the "City of Marikina Lungsod ng May Mabubuting Ugali," is from 7-9 a.m. A brand-new Toyota Corolla Altis and other major appliances are at stake in a raffle that will be held during the celebrations for the Marikina City Foundation Day, said CSFMI and PCA Mari Valley president Isidro T. Pajarillaga. Proceeds of the tournament and the raffle will go to sports development program for the youth Marikina City. For inquiries, call organizers Noel Flores (0917-8130689), Lito Pascual (0917-4119369) or Ed Manzanarez (0918-9095535).

Handlers Cup final round tonight

FAST-PACED cockfighting action is expected when the Handlers Cup 3-Cock Derby enters its championship phase tonight at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Cockpit. Sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 and Casino Filipino-Parañaque, the derby stakes a total cash prize of P300,000 with the entry fee pegged at P6,600. A galore of giveaways and special prizes, including P2,000 in casino chips from CF-Parañaque, five T-shirts, product samples of Sagupaan Superfeeds and one case of San Miguel Beer, await each participant. The fastest kill winner gets P10,000 and a trophy courtesy of popular cocker Patrick Antonio. Two refrigerators will go to the champions. For inquiries, call 873-1040 and 0917-9468900.

MM, Central Luzon cockers in showdown

PROMINENT cockers from Metro Manila and Central Luzon collide today in the "Sagupaan for the Big Boys 5-Cock Derby" at the Pampanga Coliseum in the City of San Fernando. The first of the more than 70 fights in the one-day cockfest, sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 and hosted by Patrick Antonio, starts at 5 p.m. Among the Metro Manila cockers seeing action are Pol Estrellado, Boy Royo, Blandy Tolentino, Tony Lasala, Biboy Enriquez, Raymond Velayo, Eric dela Rosa, Butchoy Olano, Louie Cua, Gov. Ito Yñares, Gerry Ramos and Mayor Nene Aguilar while the Pampanga derby regulars will be bannered by Terence Madlambayan, Jet and Joel Fernando, Eric Lu, engineer Efren Canlas, Val Garcia, Rene Pineda, Nestor Salunga, among others. For an entry fee of P22,000, the guaranteed prize at stake is P500,000. A special prize of P15,000 await the fastest kill champion. Submission of weights is on derby day, from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. For inquiries, call 0917-8307812.

NEW PBL TOAST: Philippine Basketball League chair and Blu Star owner Dioceldo Sy (seated, third from left) treats the team to a dinner for placing third in the recent PBL Platinum Cup. Sy promised to field a stronger team in the next PBL tournament.

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Dustin HOFFMAN
Rachel WEISZ
RUNAWAY JURY

From master storyteller John Grisham ("The Firm", "The Pelican Brief") comes RUNAWAY JURY, a suspenseful thriller about a high-priced and ruthless jury "consultant" (Gene Hackman) who will stop at nothing to secure a verdict on an explosive trial. With lives and millions of dollars at stake, the fixer wages a deadly battle with a jury member (John Cusack), a mysterious woman (Rachel Weisz) and an honest lawyer (Dustin Hoffman).

Runaway Jury marks the first pairing of Hollywood legends GENE HACKMAN and DUSTIN HOFFMAN.

Don't miss this once in a lifetime event on screen.

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7 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS

13 BRITISH ACADEMY FILM AWARD NOMINATIONS INCLUDING BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

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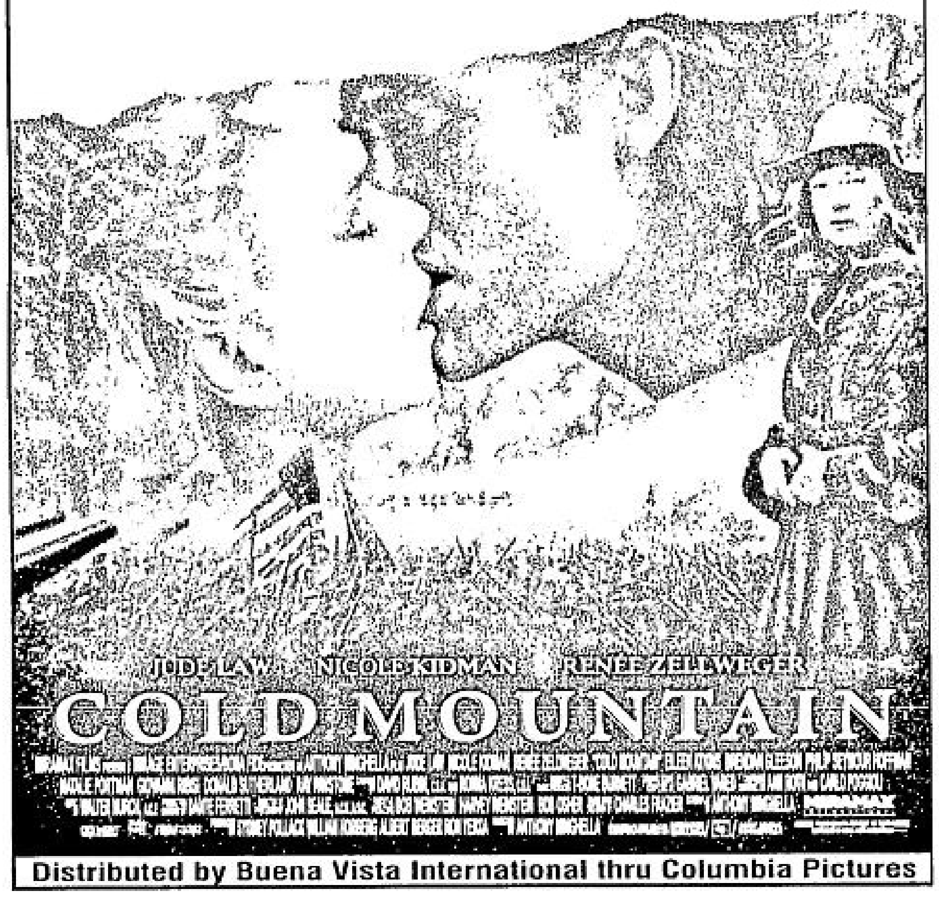
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NICOLE KIDMAN
RENEE ZELLWEGER
COLD MOUNTAIN

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A Good Lawyer's Wife
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WINNER
BEST FILM OF THE YEAR
BEST ACTOR
2003 National Board of Review

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Online Film Critics Society

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Los Angeles Film Critics Association

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Chicago Movie Critics

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 San Diego Film Critics

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Southeastern Film Critics

WINNER
BEST PICTURE
2003 NY Online Film Critics

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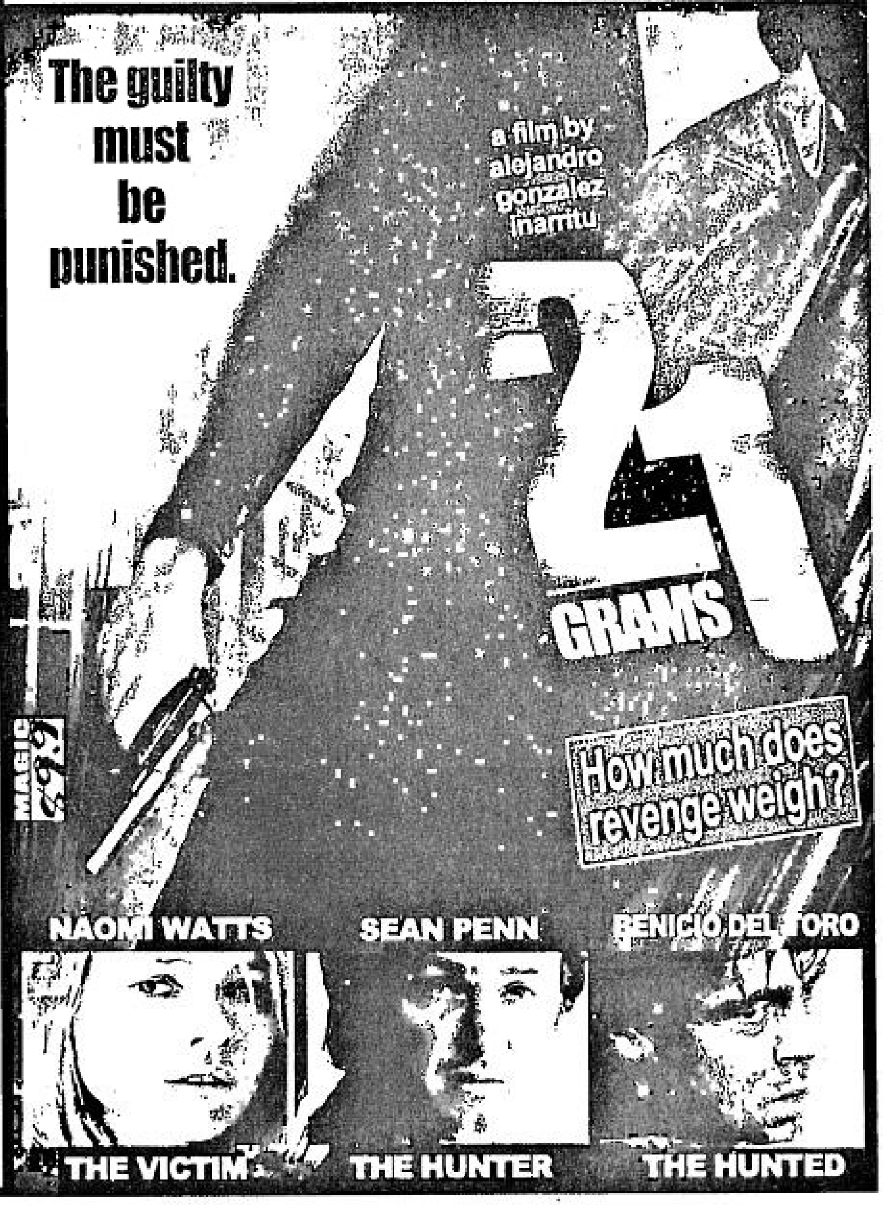
2003 Florida Film Critics

WINNER
BEST ACTOR
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Washington DC Film Critics


The guilty must be punished.
a film by alejandro gonzalez inarritu
21 GRAMS
How much does revenge weigh?
MAGIC
NAOMI WATTS
SEAN PENN
BENICIO DEL TORO
THE VICTIM
THE HUNTER
THE HUNTED

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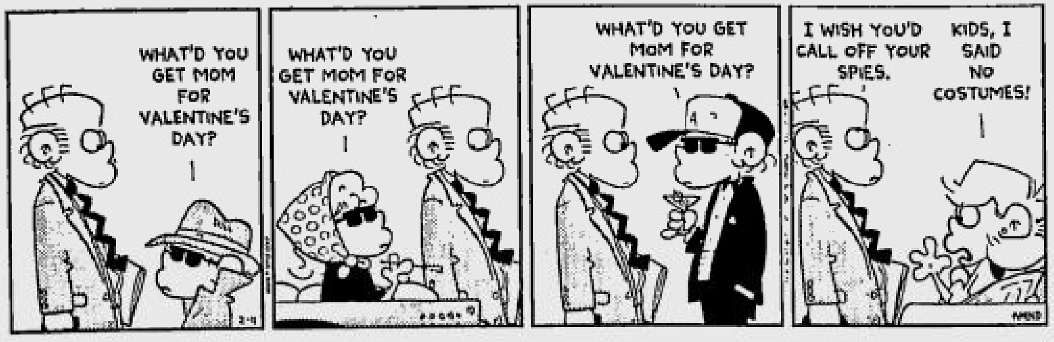
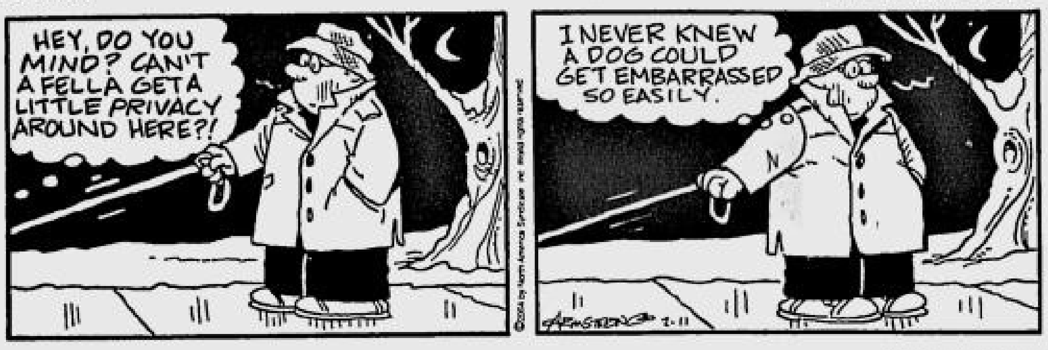
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WHAT'D YOU GET MOM FOR VALENTINE'S DAY?
WHAT'D YOU GET MOM FOR VALENTINE'S DAY?
WHAT'D YOU GET MOM FOR VALENTINE'S DAY?
I WISH YOU'D CALL OFF YOUR SPIES.
KIDS, I SAID NO COSTUMES!

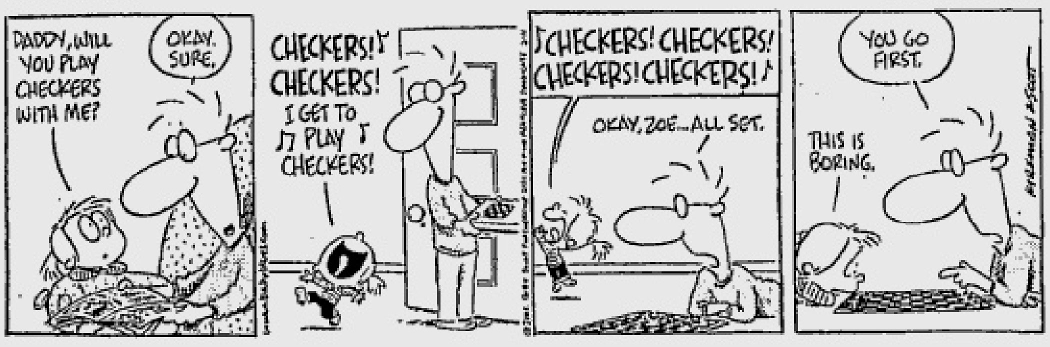
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


HEY, DO YOU MIND? CAN'T A FELLA GET A LITTLE PRIVACY AROUND HERE?!
I NEVER KNEW A DOG COULD GET EMBARRASSED SO EASILY.

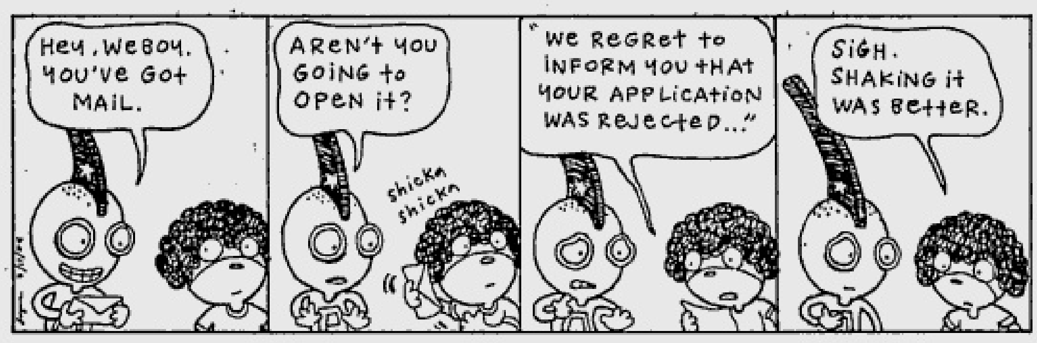
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DADDY, WILL YOU PLAY CHECKERS WITH ME?
OKAY. SURE.
CHECKERS! CHECKERS! I GET TO PLAY CHECKERS!
CHECKERS! CHECKERS! CHECKERS! CHECKERS!
OKAY, ZOE... ALL SET.
YOU GO FIRST.
THIS IS BORING.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, Weboy. You've Got MAIL.
AREN'T YOU GOING to OPEN it?
shicka shicka
"We Regret to inform you that your Application was Rejected..."
SiGH. SHAKING it WAS Better.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are idealistic, and because of this, you want to make reforms and improvements in the world around you. You are original and inventive. You think outside of the box. You enjoy life's comforts but are not a slave to them. Freedom is what you value. This year is full of exciting, fresh beginnings.
Birthdate of: Leslie Nielsen, actor; Sheryl Crow, singer; Jennifer Aniston, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Discussions with friends are important now. Tell others about your long-term goals and dreams for the future. Their feedback will be helpful.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Look your best now, because others notice you more than usual. Perhaps you are singled out for special responsibilities. If so, you will succeed.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Grab every opportunity to learn more about the world right now. Your hunger for knowledge is keen. Travel and study will benefit you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Work to clear up messy details related to insurance, shared property, estates, inheritances and the joint ownership of something. Your ability to do this effectively is wonderful right now. Get down to it!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): It's important to remember that for a partnership to be successful, you must be as good for your partner as he or she is for you. Ask yourself if you have a generous give-and-take in your closest relationships.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your abilities to organize your life and work hard right now are excellent. Clean up, throw out, paint, sort and file your belongings. Get rid of at least five things you no longer use.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Any creative effort will delight you now. When it comes to doing something creative, you don't have to do it for money. It doesn't have to be excellent. It's the doing that counts (more than the result).

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Family discussions are important now. You might want to clarify something with a parent. Make practical improvements where you live.

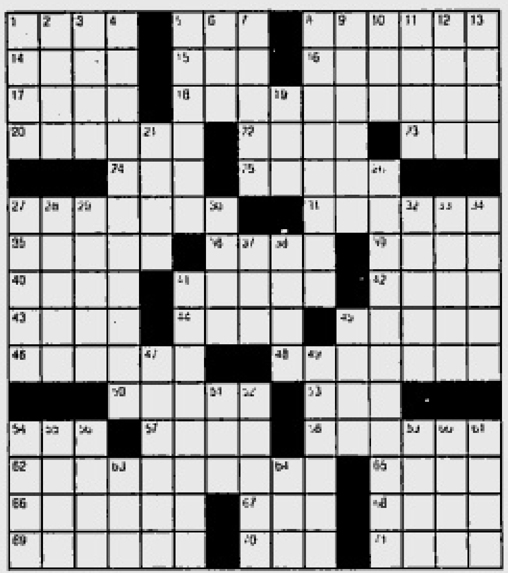
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Be extra-clear in all your communications with others. Don't be afraid to express your affection for those you see on a daily basis. These people are important to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You might want to buy something now that makes you feel especially proud. You're always concerned about the impression you make on others.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Three planets are in your sign now. You are especially empowered! Use this time to recharge your batteries for the rest of the year.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You need more time to rest and ponder your general situation. Collect your thoughts so that you have a better idea of what you want to do in the future.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Verna Suit
Silver Spring, MD

2/11/04

ACROSS
1 Smart guy?
5 Pers. in charge
8 Expansion
14 Prefix for cop?
15 Grade of wine
16 Call it a career
17 Caramel-topped custard
18 Embroidery team?
20 Refuses
22 Blood: pref.
23 Positive answer
24 "The Daughter of Time" author
25 Purple shade
27 Painter of "Guernica"
31 Dazed and confused
35 Cowgirl Dale
36 Describe
39 Somewhat, in music
40 Egyptian Christian
41 Horne and Olin
42 Dorothy's dog
43 Fast-food magnate Ray
44 Shore patrol grp.
45 "Them" author
46 Ecclesiastical councils
48 Lack of reverence
50 Screwy
53 "Ich bin __ Berliner" (JFK)
54 Simile middle
57 Excavations
58 Director of "The Bicycle Thief"
62 Farm-raised fish?
65 Taro's tuber
66 Gentlewomen
67 Popular ISP
68 Not home
69 On deck
70 Caviar
71 Dawber and Tillis

DOWN
1 Comic barks
2 Singer Falana
3 Auction site
4 Faithful cellmate?
5 Real family?
6 Fido's warning
7 Actress Mercedes
8 Mischief-makers
9 Give temporarily again
10 Pharmacy abbr.
11 Sinewy
12 Shoe shaper
13 Shapes with an axe
19 Chinese dynasty
21 Highland loch
26 Skipper's headwear?
27 Quarter bushels
28 "Ebony and __"
29 Fowl choice
30 Corrida cheers
32 "The Trip to Bountiful" writer
33 Two quartets
34 Scatterbrained
37 Back of a bus.
38 Creche trio
41 Most robust
45 Mayberry kid
47 House divided
49 Butt in
51 Estab. measure
52 Film award
54 Leg. action grp.
55 Cleansing agent
56 New wing on a bldg.
59 Corn-belt state
60 Stuff
61 Tan and Irving
63 Dotted cube
64 Tic-tac-toe win

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

B	A	I	T		A	D	O	B	E		A	V	I	D
U	L	N	A		D	U	R	E	R		V	I	V	A
R	E	D	S	T	O	N	E	A	R	S	E	N	A	L
L	E	O	T	A	R	D	S			I	R	E	N	E
			E	P	E	E		L	I	D	S			
M	B	A			D	E	C	O	D	E		E	N	D
A	L	I	E	N			R	E	E	M	P	L	O	Y
Y	E	L	L	O	W	S	U	B	M	A	R	I	N	E
B	E	E	F	C	A	K	E			N	O	T	E	R
E	D	D		T	R	I	L	L	S			E	T	S
			F	U	D	D		I	T	I	S			
A	D	L	E	R			T	S	U	N	A	M	I	S
G	R	E	E	N	B	A	Y	P	A	C	K	E	R	S
E	N	I	D		O	W	N	E	R		E	R	A	T
D	O	S	S		A	L	E	R	T		S	E	E	S

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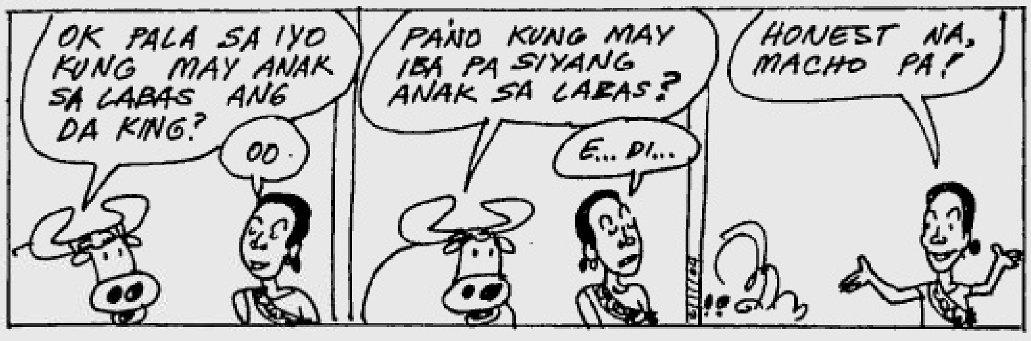
2/11/04

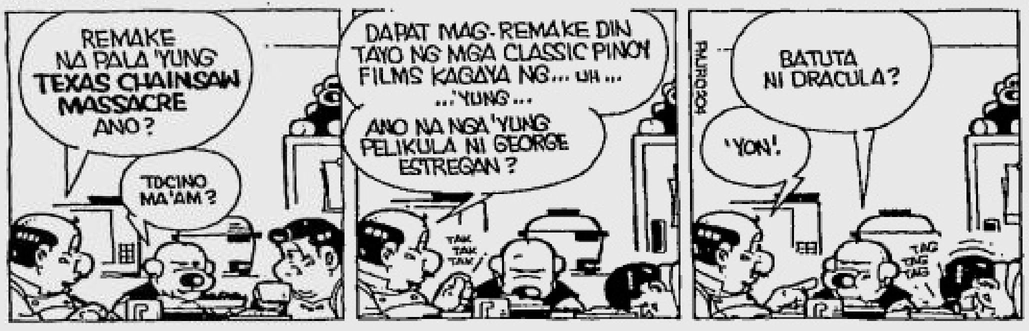
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


OK PALA SA IYO KUNG MAY ANAK SA LABAS ANG DA KING?
OO.
PAANO KUNG MAY IBA PA SIYANG ANAK SA LABAS?
E... DI...
HONEST NA, MACHO PA!

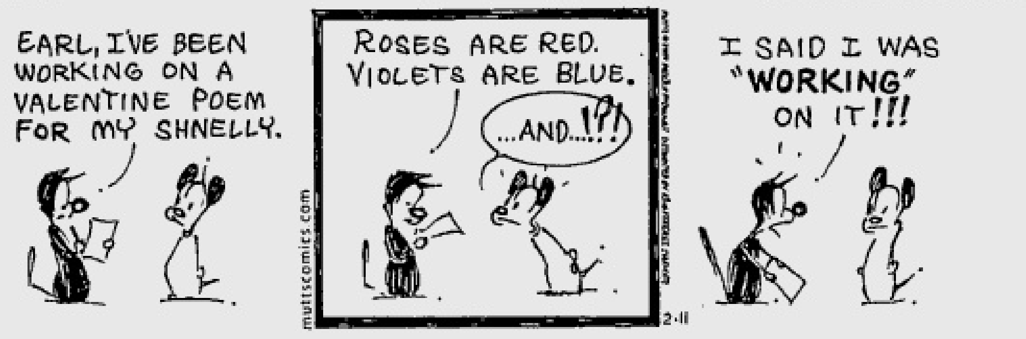
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


REMAKE NA PALA 'YUNG TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE ANO?
TOCINO MA'AM?
DAPAT MAG-REMAKE DIN TAYO NG MGA CLASSIC PINOY FILMS KAGAYA NG... UH... ...'YUNG...
ANO NA NGA 'YUNG PELIKULA NI GEORGE ESTREGAN?
TAK TAK TAK
BATUTA NI DRACULA?
'YON!
TAG TAG TAG

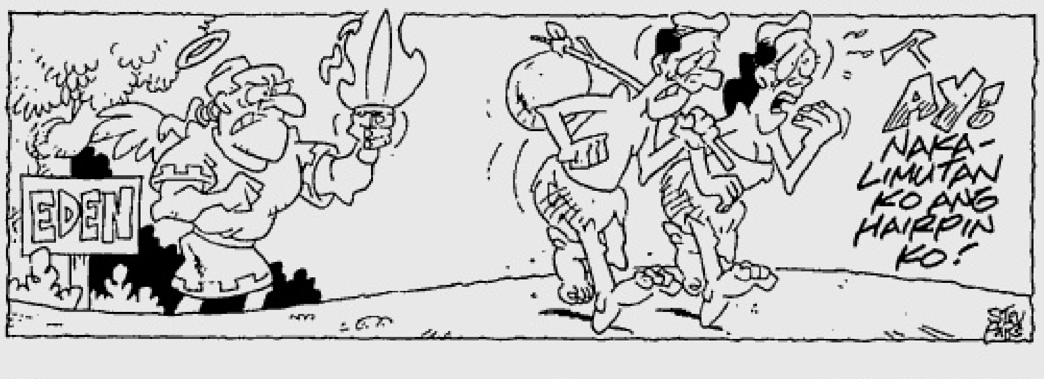
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EARL, I'VE BEEN WORKING ON A VALENTINE POEM FOR MY SHNELLY.
ROSES ARE RED. VIOLETS ARE BLUE.
...AND...!?!
I SAID I WAS "WORKING" ON IT!!!
muttscomics.com

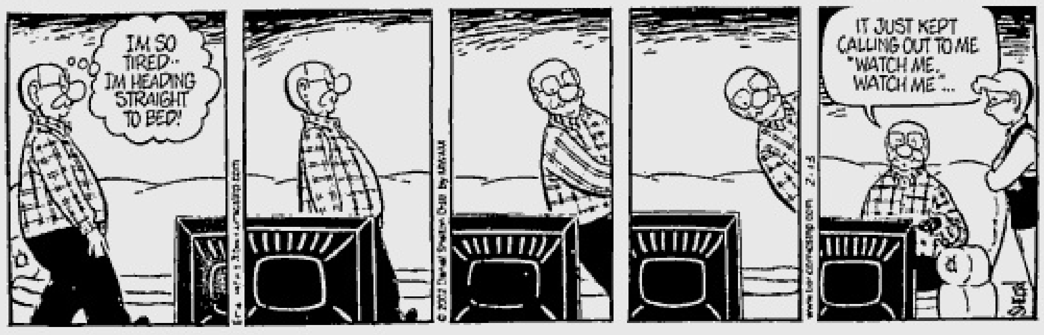
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


EDEN
AY! NAKALIMUTAN KO ANG HAIRPIN KO!

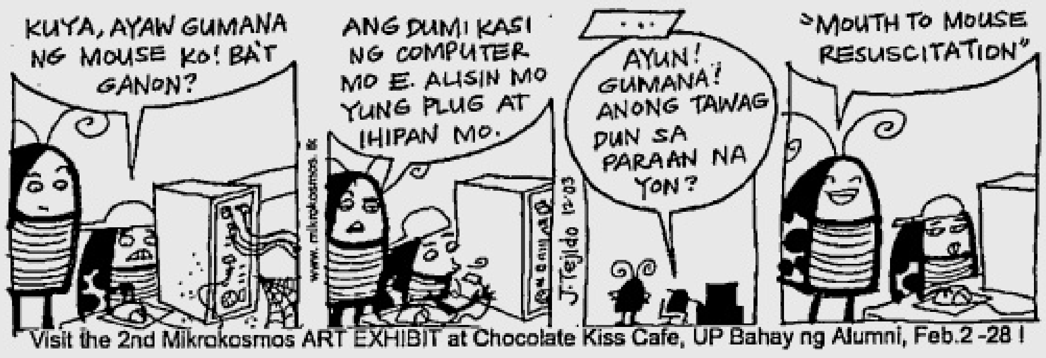
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I'M SO TIRED.. I'M HEADING STRAIGHT TO BED!
IT JUST KEPT CALLING OUT TO ME "WATCH ME, WATCH ME"...

MIKROKOSMOS

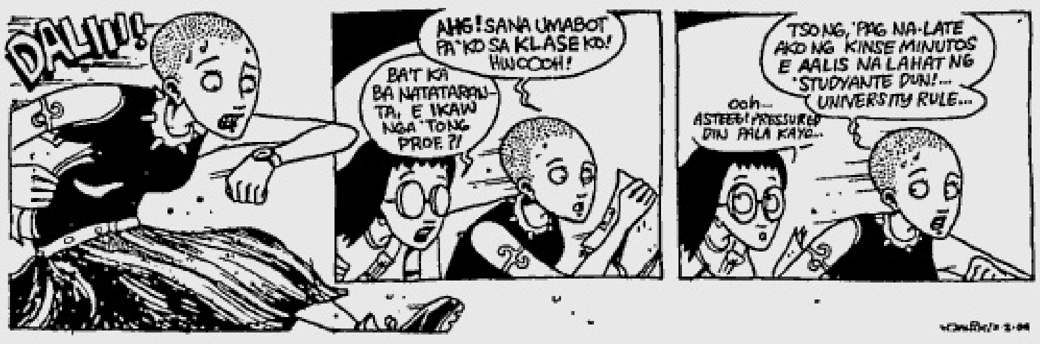
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KUYA, AYAW GUMANA NG MOUSE KO! BA'T GANON?
ANG DUMI KASI NG COMPUTER MO E. ALISIN MO YUNG PLUG AT IHIPAN MO.
...
AYUN! GUMANA! ANONG TAWAG DUN SA PARAAN NA YON?
"MOUTH TO MOUSE RESUSCITATION"
www.mikrokosmos.tk
J. Tejido 12-03

Visit the 2nd Mikrokosmos ART EXHIBIT at Chocolate Kiss Cafe, UP Bahay ng Alumni, Feb.2 -28 !

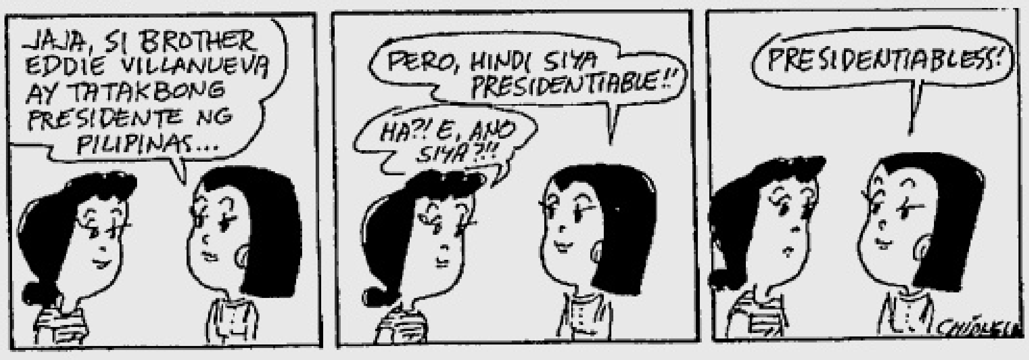
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


DALI!!!
AHG! SANA UMABOT PA 'KO SA KLASE KO! HWOOOH!
BA'T KA BA NATATARANTA, E IKAW NGA 'TONG PROF.?!
TSONG, 'PAG NA-LATE AKO NG KINSE MINUTOS E AALIS NA LAHAT NG 'STUDYANTE DUN!... UNIVERSITY RULE...
ooh... ASTEEG! PRESSURED DIN PALA KAYO...

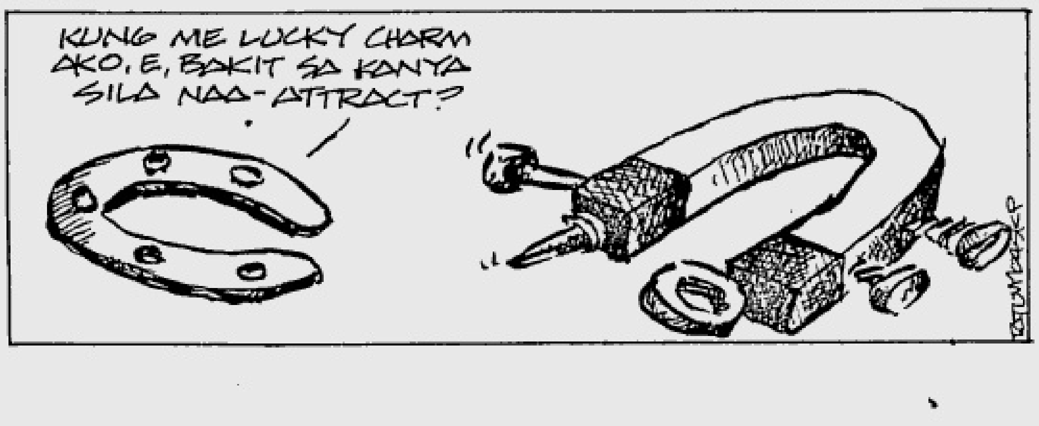
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, SI BROTHER EDDIE VILLANUEVA AY TATAKBONG PRESIDENTE NG PILIPINAS...
PERO, HINDI SIYA PRESIDENTIABLE!!
HA?! E, ANO SIYA?!!
PRESIDENTIABLESS!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


KUNG ME LUCKY CHARM AKO, E, BAKIT SA KANYA SILA NAA-ATTRACT?

THE AUSSIES are coming in a series of male cabaret revue called "Thunder From Down Under" on Feb. 13, 14 and 15 at the Ampitheatre of Casino Filipino in Parañaque. Call Eventscape Manila at 561-0422 or visit www.ticketworld.com.ph for details. ROGER MARGALLO

Paolo Santos remains . . .

From page A28

Fame didn't come quite easy for Paolo. He was doing the rounds of small music bars for two years before he got his big break. He persisted, and his efforts are now paying off.

Today, he has three CDs to his name, a successful commercial jingle, countless successful gigs, a live-concert video, "Acoustic Night Out," and even an independent label called Acoustic Gold Productions.

Tonight, Paolo, together with Bituin Escalante and Acoustic Jive, will perform in a pre-Valentine concert called "The Game of Love" at the Music Museum.

The artists will take audiences on a bittersweet walk down memory lane, with songs and stories that relive the thrill of falling in love.

Paolo is aware that despite his hit singles, best-selling CDs and successful shows, he simply cannot please everyone. But as long as he loves what he does, Paolo will go on singing beautiful melodies.

His singles include the original "Coffee Cup" and a cover version of "Moonlight Over Paris." He was also a featured performer on the "Tunog Acoustic" compilation album from Warner Music and he has a weekly radio show on Wave 89.1-FM, featuring soothing acoustic-guitar-based tunes.

Sinceritance, high . . .

From page A29

Guest: *Gusto ko talaga magkaroon ng* recording album!

(*Ay,* recording album!)

* * *

Host: What do you want to say to your friend *na nagtatampo yata sa 'yo?*

Guest: I want to say so many things, but most of all, I want to make it clear—I really sorry!

(You should be!)

'Cold Mountain'

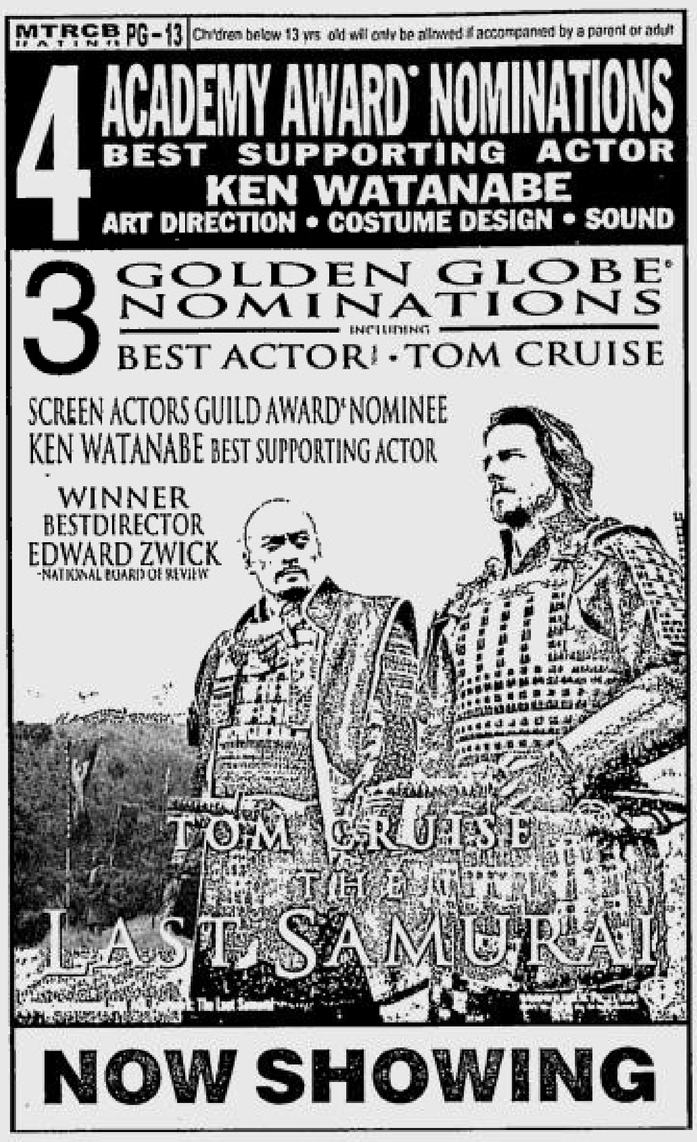
IN ANTHONY Minghella's "Cold Mountain," **Nicole Kidman** plays the challenging role of Ada, a preacher's daughter who discovers a different side to herself when war broke out.

Ada is well-educated, city-bred, and has always been protected by her father. In the wake of his unexpected death and her beloved Inman's (**Jude Law**) departure for the battlefield, Ada finds herself utterly alone on a farm, in extreme danger, but without the vaguest idea of how to fend for herself.

Faced with starvation and the imminent threat of attack, she must learn to live off the land, and trust her heart as she befriends a gutsy, self-reliant drifter named Ruby (**Renee Zellweger**).

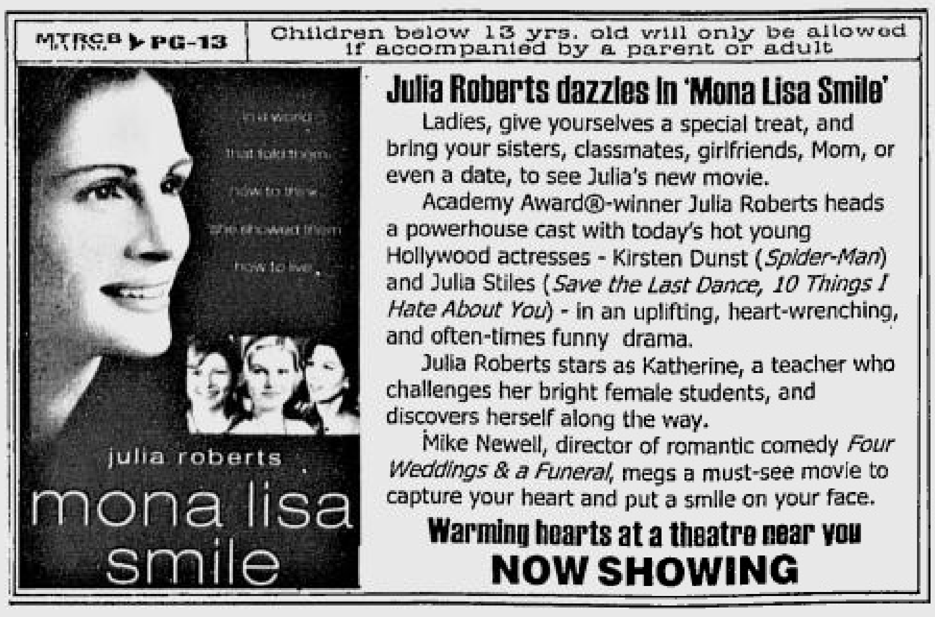
Kidman was drawn to the script not just because her character was challenging, but because "it tells a story that has a lot to say about community, faith and believing deeply in something.

"I also love the theme 'of female friendship in the story of Ada and Ruby. It's rare that you get two such wonderfully rich female roles in the same film."

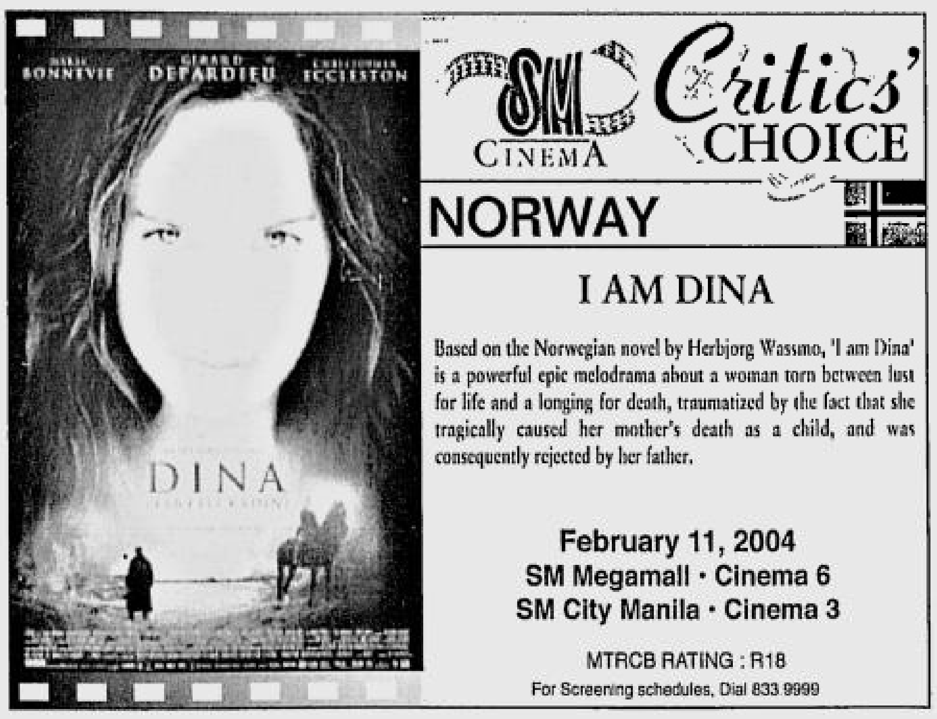


MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
4 ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINATIONS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
KEN WATANABE
ART DIRECTION • COSTUME DESIGN • SOUND
3 GOLDEN GLOBE® NOMINATIONS
INCLUDING
BEST ACTOR • TOM CRUISE
SCREEN ACTORS GUILD AWARD® NOMINEE
KEN WATANABE BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
WINNER
BEST DIRECTOR
EDWARD ZWICK
-NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW
TOM CRUISE
THE LAST SAMURAI
NOW SHOWING

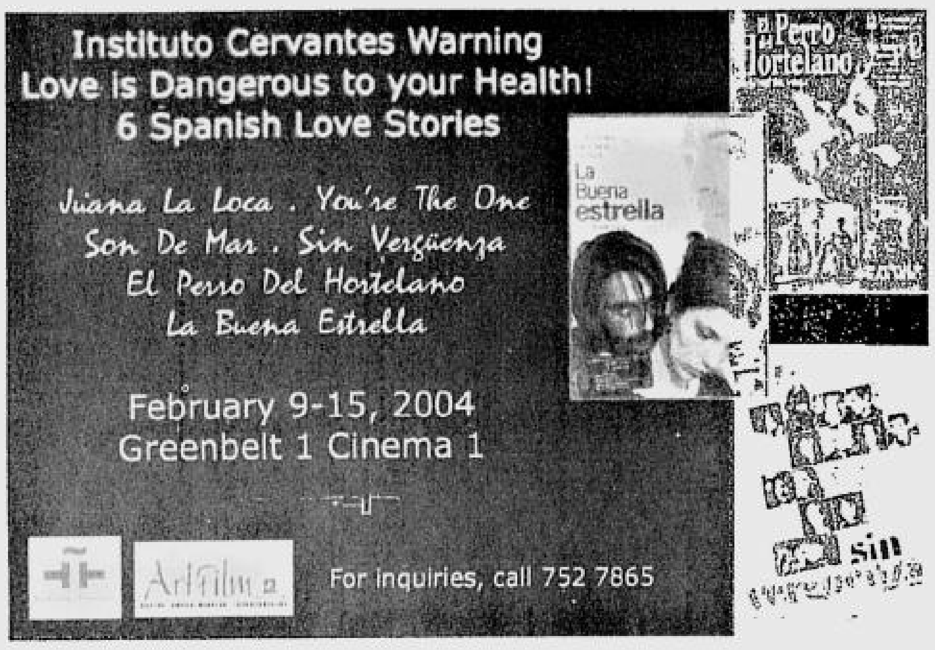
AYALA CINEMAS
OPENS TODAY
AT ALL AYALA CINEMAS
Claudine Barretto Piolo Pascual
A Film by
Olivia M. Lamasan
MILAN
Reserve your seats by texting
SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4
& send to 2333 for Globe or 211 for Smart.
Or log on to www.sureseats.com
for web reservation
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)
SCREENING SCHEDULES
FOR FEBRUARY 11
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Cinema 2 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
Cinema 3 – 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30
AYALA CENTER CEBU
Cinema 1 – 11:40, 1:50, 4:25, 7:00, 10:00
GLORIETTA 1
Cinema 1 – 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50
Cinema 3 – 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
GLORIETTA 4
Cinema 6 – 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30
GREENBELT 1
Cinema 2 – 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
GREENBELT 3
Cinema 2 – 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00
Screening schedules are subject to change without prior notice
STAR CINEMA
ABS-CBN
Ayala Malls: Because you deserve more!
AYALA CENTER
AYALA CINEMAS. BEYOND MOVIES.



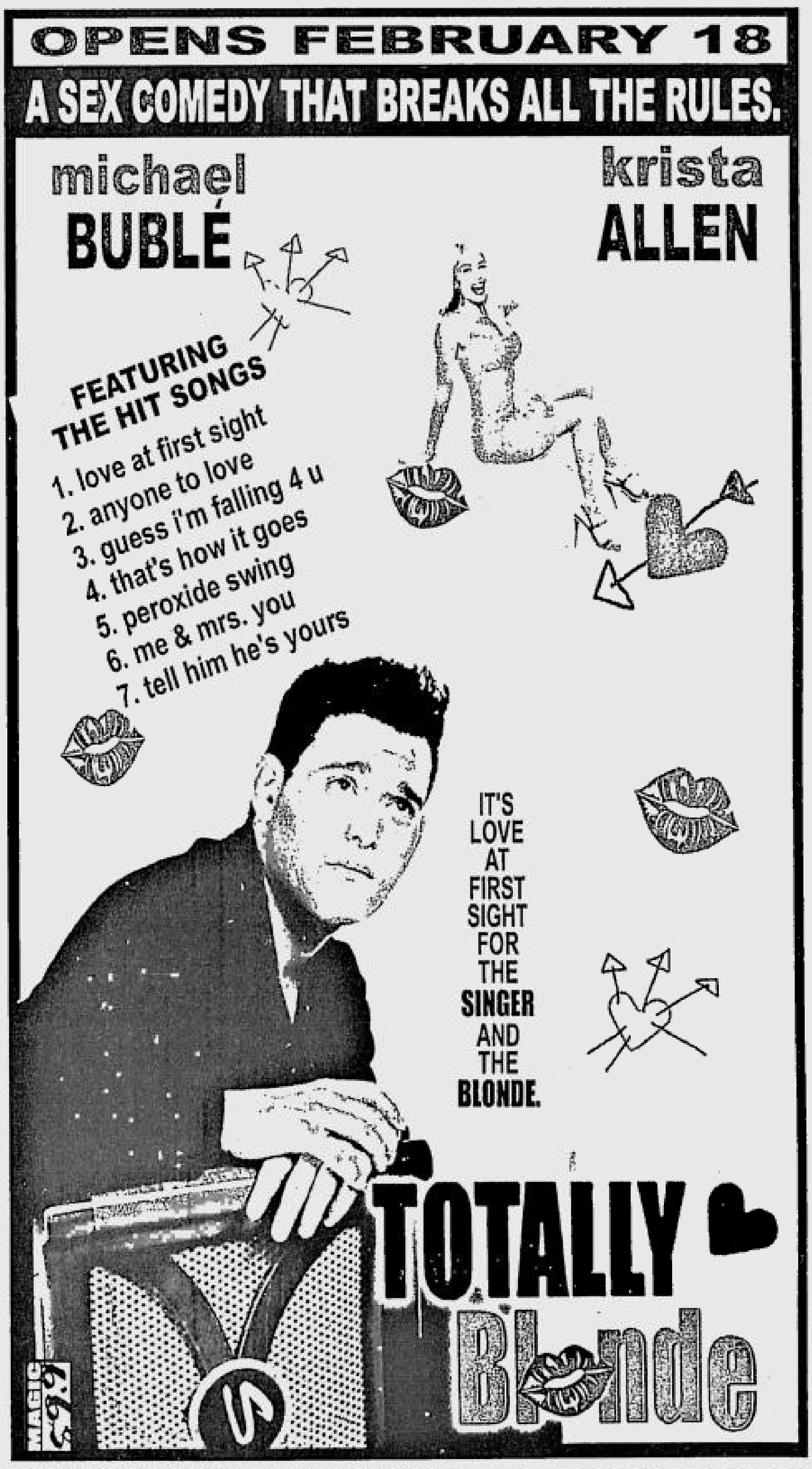
MTRCB PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
julia roberts
mona lisa smile
Julia Roberts dazzles in 'Mona Lisa Smile'
Ladies, give yourselves a special treat, and bring your sisters, classmates, girlfriends, Mom, or even a date, to see Julia's new movie.
Academy Award®-winner Julia Roberts heads a powerhouse cast with today's hot young Hollywood actresses - Kirsten Dunst (*Spider-Man*) and Julia Stiles (*Save the Last Dance, 10 Things I Hate About You*) - in an uplifting, heart-wrenching, and often-times funny drama.
Julia Roberts stars as Katherine, a teacher who challenges her bright female students, and discovers herself along the way.
Mike Newell, director of romantic comedy *Four Weddings & a Funeral,* megs a must-see movie to capture your heart and put a smile on your face.
Warming hearts at a theatre near you
NOW SHOWING



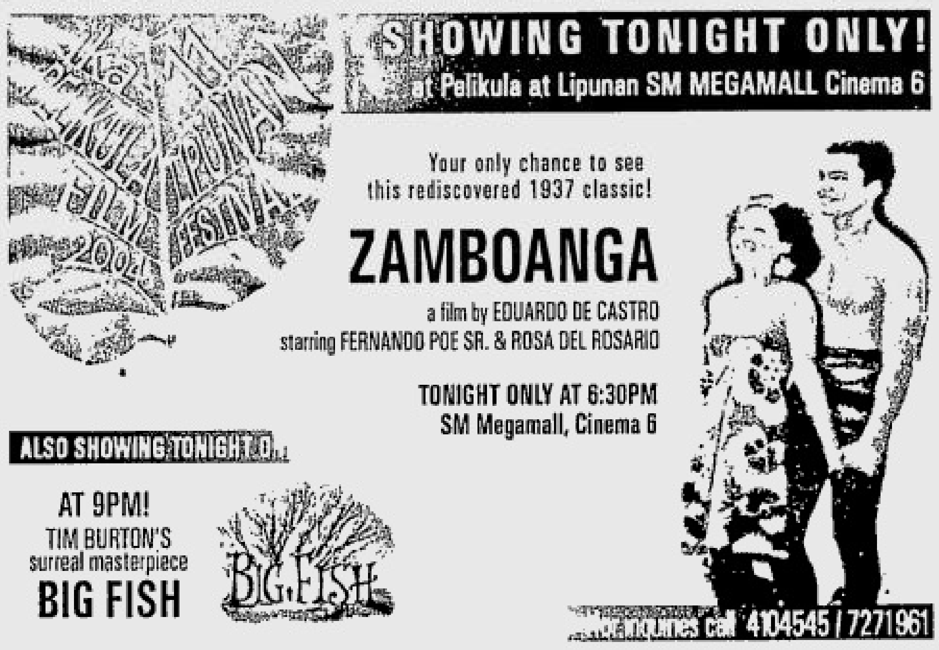
BONNEVIE DEPARDIEU ECCLESTON
DINA
SM CINEMA Critics' CHOICE
NORWAY
I AM DINA
Based on the Norwegian novel by Herbjorg Wassmo, 'I am Dina' is a powerful epic melodrama about a woman torn between lust for life and a longing for death, traumatized by the fact that she tragically caused her mother's death as a child, and was consequently rejected by her father.
February 11, 2004
SM Megamall • Cinema 6
SM City Manila • Cinema 3
MTRCB RATING : R18
For Screening schedules, Dial 833 9999



Instituto Cervantes Warning
Love is Dangerous to your Health!
6 Spanish Love Stories
Juana La Loca . You're The One
Son De Mar . Sin Vergüenza
El Perro Del Hortelano
La Buena Estrella
February 9-15, 2004
Greenbelt 1 Cinema 1
For inquiries, call 752 7865
El Perro Hortelano
La Buena estrella
sin



OPENS FEBRUARY 18
A SEX COMEDY THAT BREAKS ALL THE RULES.
michael BUBLÉ
krista ALLEN
FEATURING THE HIT SONGS
1. love at first sight
2. anyone to love
3. guess i'm falling 4 u
4. that's how it goes
5. peroxide swing
6. me & mrs. you
7. tell him he's yours
IT'S LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT FOR THE SINGER AND THE BLONDE.
TOTALLY Blonde
MAGIC 89.9



SHOWING TONIGHT ONLY!
at Pelikula at Lipunan SM MEGAMALL Cinema 6
Your only chance to see this rediscovered 1937 classic!
ZAMBOANGA
a film by EDUARDO DE CASTRO
starring FERNANDO POE SR. & ROSA DEL ROSARIO
TONIGHT ONLY AT 6:30PM
SM Megamall, Cinema 6
ALSO SHOWING TONIGHT O...
AT 9PM!
TIM BURTON'S surreal masterpiece
BIG FISH
For inquiries call 4104545 / 7271961

Paolo Santos remains grounded

SHOW STOPPER

By Leah C. Salterio
Contributor

HE is a self-taught guitarist, with an impressive falsetto voice. He can sing a classy repertoire of songs by James Taylor, Kenny Loggins, Kenny Rankin and Stephen Bishop.

Known as "Mr. Acoustic," Paolo Santos has been recognized for signaling a new wave of acoustic artists who stormed the live performance and recording scene last year. But others have maintained that Paolo is better heard than seen. Paolo himself acknowledges that he does not have good looks, but he embraces his ordinary looks with gusto.

But when it comes to music, Paolo has made it to the big league because of sheer singing talent. He was the crowd drawer of 2003, with five to seven gigs a week. He has turned old classics into new hits and has claimed them as his own. Even his albums have registered brisk sales in the record stores.

For someone who used to earn only P800 for singing 30 songs, Paolo has not allowed success to change him. Although he will not exchange his stellar status today for anything else, Paolo remains firmly grounded.

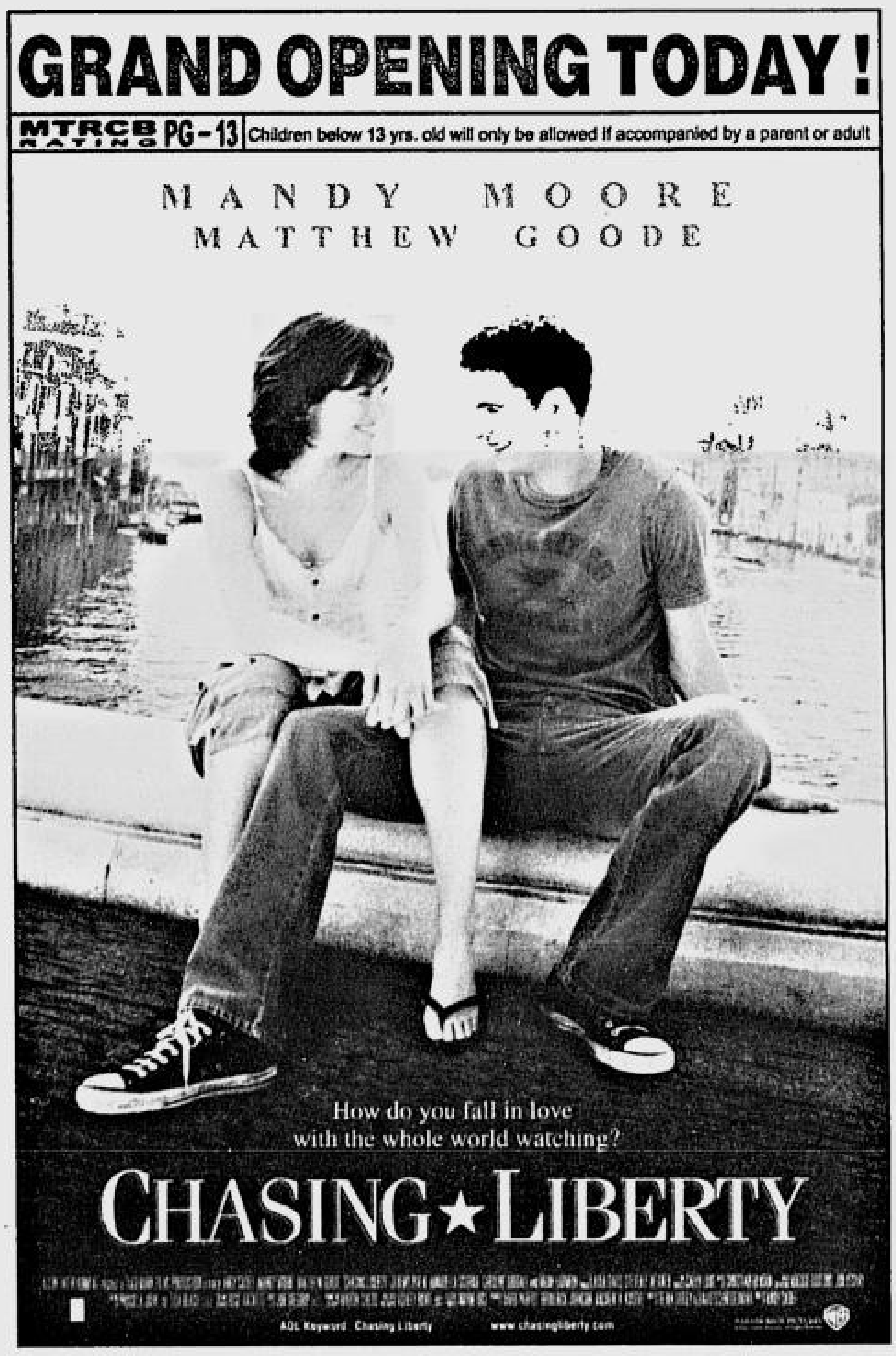
"I still do what I love," Paolo asserts. "I love to eat, go shopping and watch movies. My friends have kept me grounded. I don't really know how to handle success. I never expected it to be this big. There are other more talented artists. I sing and play the guitar because I love doing it, not because I want to become a superstar."

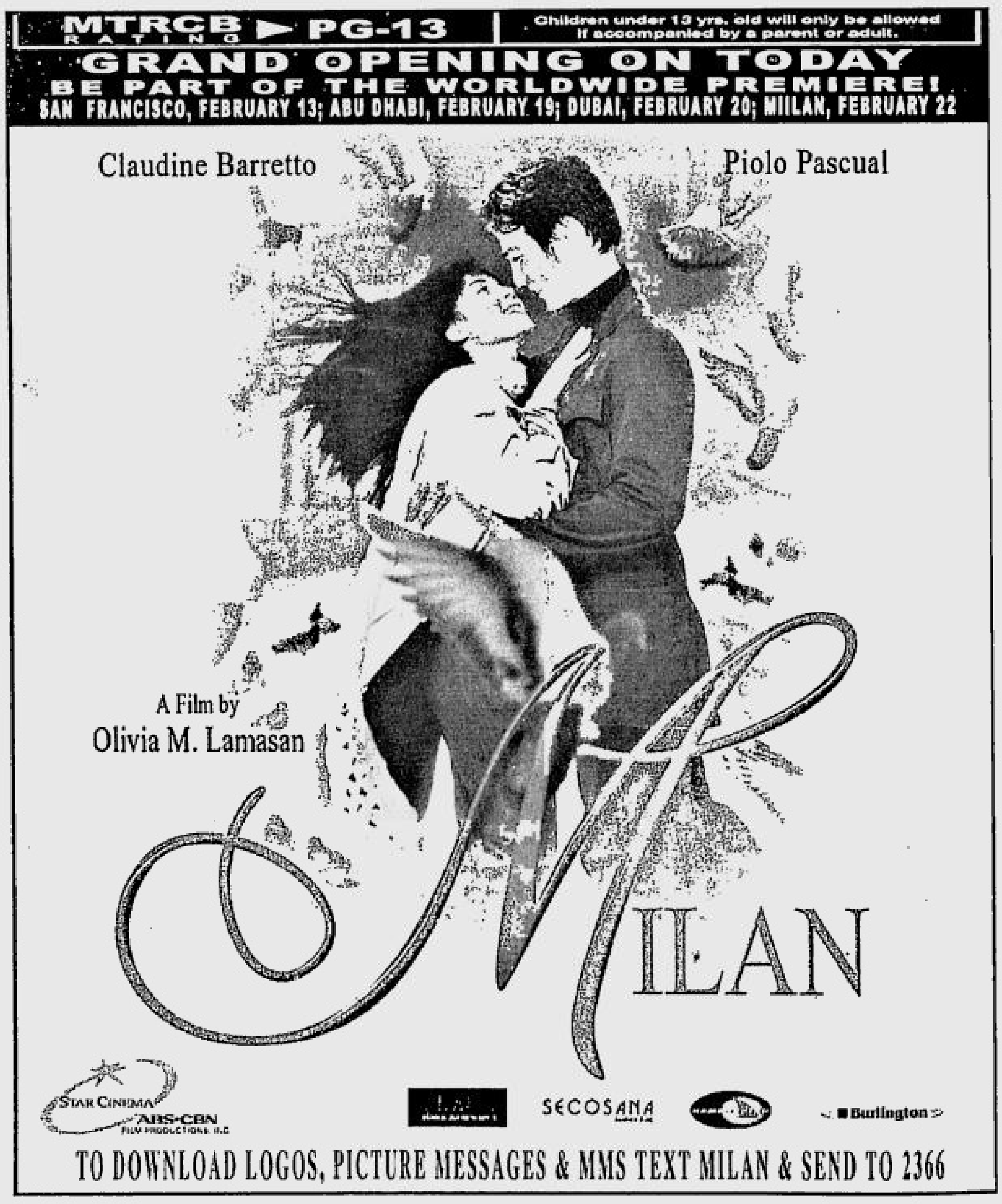
SANTOS

PAOLO/ A27

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
THE BONE SNATCHER
IT WILL SCARE YOU OUT OF YOUR SKULL!
FEB. 18

SUPER FUN, SUPER SPOOKY THRILL RIDE! OPENS TODAY!
MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED
EDDIE MURPHY
Walt Disney Pictures presents
the Haunted Mansion
Check Your Pulse At The Door... If You Have One
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures


GRAND OPENING TODAY!
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
MANDY MOORE
MATTHEW GOODE
How do you fall in love with the whole world watching?
CHASING ★ LIBERTY
AOL Keyword: Chasing Liberty
www.chasingliberty.com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GRAND OPENING ON TODAY
BE PART OF THE WORLDWIDE PREMIERE!
SAN FRANCISCO, FEBRUARY 13; ABU DHABI, FEBRUARY 19; DUBAI, FEBRUARY 20; MIILAN, FEBRUARY 22
Claudine Barretto
Piolo Pascual
A Film by Olivia M. Lamasan
MILAN
Star Cinema ABS-CBN Film Productions Inc.
SECOSANA
Burlington
TO DOWNLOAD LOGOS, PICTURE MESSAGES & MMS TEXT MILAN & SEND TO 2366

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OPENS TODAY!
A SUPER VALENTINE PRESENTATION
#1 ROMANTIC FILM IN ASIA!
F4 HEARTTHROB BREWS HIS MAGIC OF LOVE AND MISADVENTURE IN....
JERRY YAN
Magic Kitchen
A touching and hilarious story of someone torn between two lovers.
JERRY YAN • MAGGIE Q • SAMMI CHENG • ANDY LAU • MICHAEL WONG • NICOLA CHEUNG
Directed by: LEE CHI NGAN
www.magic-kitchen.com
SMART PLDT bench/ YES!

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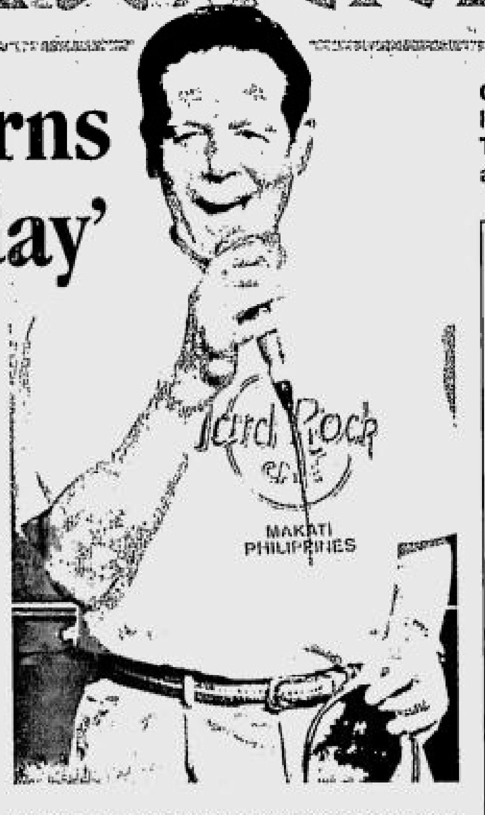
ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Spiral Starecase song earns 'more today than yesterday'



COMPOSER Pat Upton: There is a whole lot of anger and confusion in today's songs. That is why old songs with good melodies and good lyrics remain popular.

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE SONG "More Today Than Yesterday" has earned more for it's composer in the last ten years than when it was first released 35 years ago.

This is what the Spiral Starecase's front man and the song's composer, Pat Upton, told INQUIRER Entertainment in an interview yesterday.

It has been 35 years since the group first recorded the song. But its popularity has not waned, and has even crept into the consciousness of today's generation that has been brought up on heavy metal, hip-hop and Eminem's rap.

Upton can only attribute the song's longevity to its easy melody and romantic lyrics that strike a chord with music lovers everywhere.

"There is a whole lot of anger and confusion in today's songs. That is why old songs with good melodies and good lyrics remain popular," Upton said.

He will be singing "More Today Than Yesterday" and other Spiral Starecase hits such as "Broken Hearted Me" and "Our Day Will Come" during his concert dubbed "Pat Upton: More Today Than Yesterday" at the NBC Tent, The Fort, on Feb. 13 with guests, his son Pat Jr. and local singer Champagne Morales; and in a dance concert on Feb. 14 at the Hard Rock Café where he will jam with Ramon "RJ" Jacinto.

It is his first time here, but Upton said he is familiar with the Philippines because it is one of the countries where Spiral Starecase's music remains very popular.

Born in Alabama, Upton grew up singing gospel music. He cites Stevie Wonder as one of his greatest musical influences. He learned to play the guitar at 19 and honed his skill when he joined the Air Force. It was there that he joined his first band, a four-piece instrumental group called the Fydallions.

"When we went to Columbia Records to sign a record deal, they said we don't like your name. So we changed our name and we got it from an old black-and-white movie in the '30s called 'Spiral Staircase.' We just changed the spelling to make it Spiral Starecase," he said.

Spiral Starecase hit its peak in the 1970s together with other bands such as Blood, Sweat and Tears and Chicago. "More Today Than Yesterday" made it to No. 12 on the Billboard charts and was covered by other singers such as Johnny Mathis and Andy Williams and here by most bands worth their salt.

The original band was composed of Upton, who was the band's composer, vocalist and lead guitar player, Dick Lopes on saxophone, Vinny Parello on drums and Bobby Raymond on bass.

In 1994, Upton went back to recording and released "Then and Now," an album which pays tribute to love. Last year, he released a CD containing his complete Spiral Starecase recordings. It also contains Upton's version of the Hal David-Burt Bacharach original "This Guy's In Love With You" and "Since I Don't Have You."

It may be decades since he first sang and wrote these songs but Upton said that he still gets a thrill performing them in front of audiences, especially among the young who learned these songs from their parents.

And he plans to keep singing for as long as he is able to hit those high notes.

"I feel that there is no reason for me to quit. I still enjoy performing in front of different audiences and I still write songs. There is really nothing to retire from," Upton said.

Sinceritance, high Americans and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MOST of the booboos we catch on the tube are inadvertently uttered gaffes on talk and variety shows. But newscasts, even those telecast overseas, aren't exempt from funny boners, as these risible examples will attest:

Newscaster 1: Last night in Sta. Ana, an apartment raced to the ground.

(It was in an awful hurry to burn up, huh?)

Newscaster 2: The astronauts plan to drop the captured space particles over the United States, specifically over the statue of Idaho.

(One man's state is another man's statue!)

Newscaster 3: His disgraced leadership was unseated to this day, 21 years and a half years later.

(All those years!)

Newscaster 4: The beautiful masks in the cultural exhibit were all made out of creep paper.

(That's crepe paper, you creep . . .)

Newscaster 5: *Pagkatapos ng sunog, natagpuan ang dalawang patay na bangkay.*

(*May buhay ba na bangkay?* Just asking . . .)

Newscaster 6: *Sabi ng pulis, ang* suspect *ay* No. 1 *sa pagtitinda ng shabu sa palengke*—in fact, very rampant *siya.*

(—All by his lonesome?)

Newscaster 7: And now, the latest headline news about the celebrity baby: The good news is that the baby had a good nap, so good mood *siya ngayon!*

(*That's* the headline news?!)

* * *

Now, for booboos from non-news programs and station breaks:

Announcer: The following program contains views and languages not suitable for children.

(*What* languages aren't suitable for children—Swahili? Pig Latin? Advanced Technospeak?—What?)

* * *

Host: Who is your candidate for the coming elections?

Guest: The incumbent.

Host: Why?

Guest: It's clear *naman, nakikita ang kanyang* sinceritance *sa pamumuno!*

("Sinceritance"? *Bago 'yon, a!*)

* * *

Host: What's the latest on the death of the famous political leader?

Co-host: His remains arrived today. Remains, that is, ashes. *Sa* US *siya criminate.*

(As in, I refuse to answer on the grounds that it may criminate me—?)

* * *

Host: How did you feel when you acted in the Hollywood movie shot here?

Guest: It was a wonderful experience. *Kaya lang,* my neck muscles hurt.

Host: How come?

Guest: *Kasi,* everybody in the cast, especially the Americans, was very high!

(That's a really tall story!)

* * *

Host: What is your dream for yourself now that you've started your singing career?

SINCERITANCE/ A27

Scariest Asian Movie

WISHING STAIRS

SO-HIE returns from the dead to seek justice. A scene from the horror movie "WISHING STAIRS".

After The Ring, The Grudge and Tale of Two Sisters, the latest horror movie Wishing Stairs proved the staying power of asian made horror movies at the box office by drawing more than 8 million viewers during the competitive holiday season in Korea.Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand.

STORY:

"Wishing Stairs" takes place in an all-girls academy, where Ji-seong (Ji-hyo Song) and So-hie (Han-byeol Park) are best friends. Despite their tight friendship, the two couldn't be any more different. So-hie comes from an affluent family and her future is ensured; Ji-seong lives in the school dorm and struggles with an unknown future. Their fortunes are upended when a possible scholarship to a Russian ballet school becomes available. Although both girls compete for the chance to continue their ballet career, it's known that So-hie has the connections. So what's a poor girl with big ambitions to do?

Ji-seong's "salvation" appears as the 29th step on the old stairway leading up to the school property. Although the stairway only has 28 steps, it's rumored that if one wants something badly enough, a 29th step will appear to them, allowing them to make a wish that is certain to come true.

Ji-seong takes the dive… she makes an evil wish after reaching the 29th imaginary step. The result is the death of her best friend, who later returns as a ghost in search of justice.

The ambience you'd expect to find in an Asian horror film is here, including but not limited to: slow pans to reveal the ghost in the background; said ghost having long black hair and standing perfectly still, hair draped over her face; said ghost crawling out of tight confines.

With a higher budget than most asian horror movies and improvement in the special effects category (such as the fox stairs literally coming alive with stone faces and grappling arms). The film is made scarier than any horror films you have ever seen. Acclaimed Korean director Yun Jae Yon makes sure that the audience will be screaming with fright from beginning to end.

Wishing Stairs carefully combines local ghost legends with the hidden anxieties, petty cruelties and the conflicts between competitiveness and affection in the hearts of young women.

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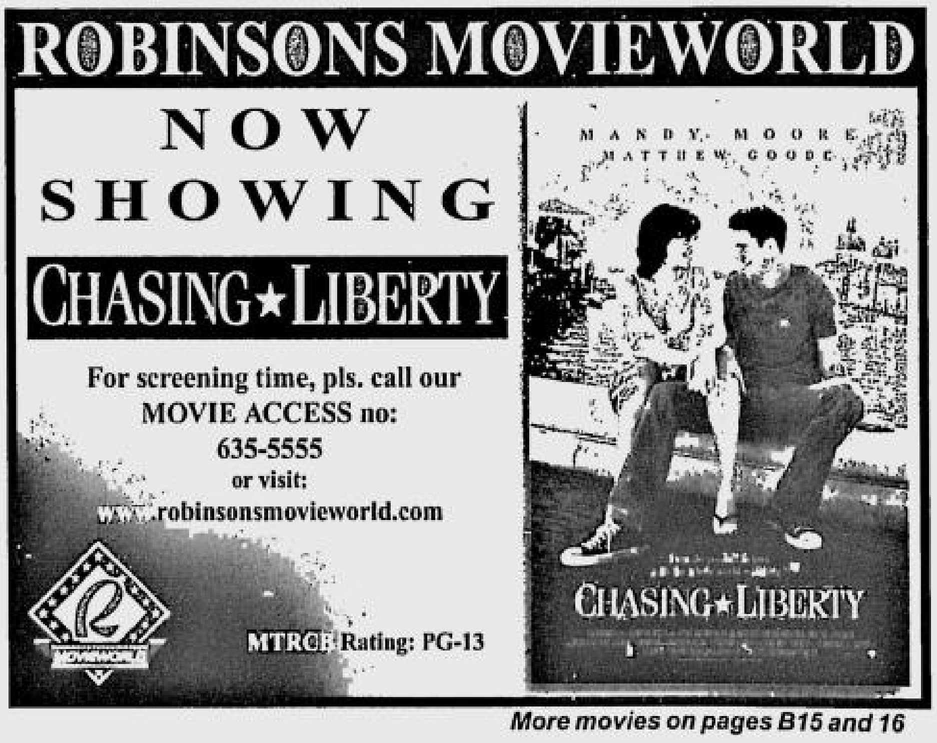

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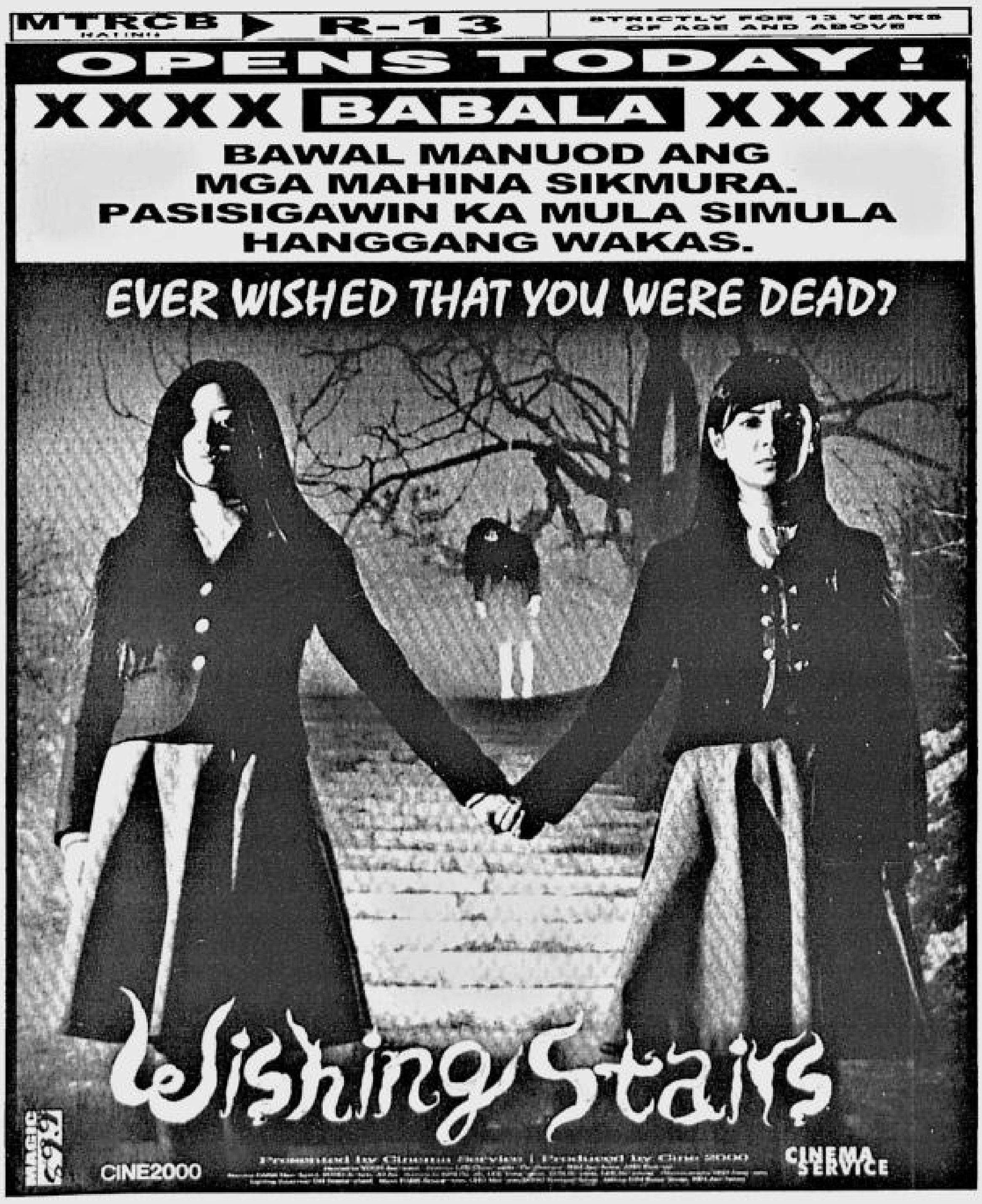
MTRCB Rating: PG-13

More movies on pages B15 and 16



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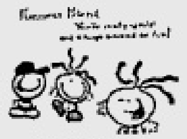

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bubblegum06

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fgsmilegirl

bubblegum07

Papemelroti

iloveyou2_b.

thinking of you

thinkingofyou_b

Remember that friendship is a wise investment
papemelroti

wise_invest.tif

holdinghands_b

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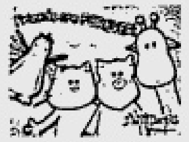

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Missing U...
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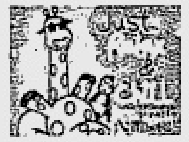
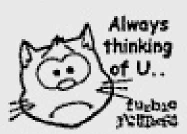
missingyoufurbie



justrelaxgiraffe

wassupani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besoberribbit

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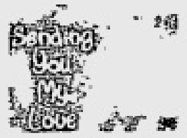
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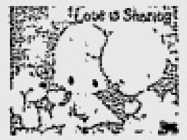
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RP launches $500-M bond issue

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINES yesterday launched a $500-million global bond float maturing in 2011.

Although aimed at swapping with holders of short-term sovereign debt papers, new investors could also buy the seven-year bonds, according to National Treasurer Sergio Edeza.

The bond float and swap will be handled by JP Morgan Securities Inc., Citigroup Global Markets Inc. and Deutsche Bank Securities. The 2011 bonds will be listed on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange.

Edeza said the government would accept for swap with the 7-year bonds those debt paper maturing in 2008 and the 2024 bonds that gave investors the option to sell these back to the government from 2006 to 2010.

Edeza said the so-called Brady bonds issued in the early 1990s and maturing in 2017 and 2018 could also be swapped with the 2011 global bonds.

"The idea is to exchange existing bonds that are nearing maturity and are expensive with the new 2011 global bonds," he explained.

The government would announce the results of the bond issue on Feb. 13. The size of the bond float can exceed $500 million depending on the market's appetite.

Deputy Treasurer Mina Figueroa said the bond flotation was primarily meant to lengthen the maturity of the country's debt profile. "If we could raise new funds, the better."

Edeza said the government would like to push back the maturity of some of its foreign debt beyond 2009. "This is in line with the government's program of balancing the budget by 2009, so we want to delay the maturity of some debt when the government has a better paying capacity," he added.

The government currently has $1 billion worth of outstanding bonds maturing in 2008, $1.3 billion falling due in 2009, $1 billion maturing in 2024 (with investors given the option to retire these in 2006), and $1.1 billion in Brady bonds.

The Philippines is the biggest sovereign issuer in Asia outside of Japan. So far, it had raised $1.05 billion of its $1.85-billion requirement for this year.

Brady bonds were issued by the government in 1992 when it restructured the country's foreign debt. Although long-term in nature, the Brady bonds were backed by US treasury bills as collateral, which made them expensive for the government.

Government officials said the country must take advantage of the liquid foreign bond market that had not been tapped by any Asian sovereign issuer this year. The government must also proceed with the bond sale before interest rates in the United States go up.

The cost of a sovereign bond issue is determined by the benchmark interest rate plus a spread that investors require to offset the risks perceived in placing their funds on any debt paper. The higher the perceived risks, the wider the spreads.

Spreads on 10-year Philippine bonds in the secondary market averaged at about 4 percentage

RP/B4

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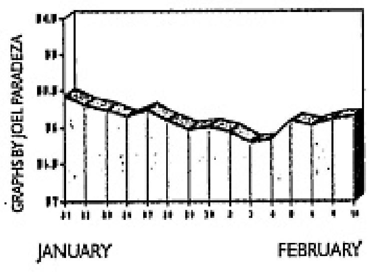

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P 55.845 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 10, 2004

Y 105.40 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 10, 2004

GOLD: $407.90-408.40

per ounce Hong Kong, Feb. 10, 2004

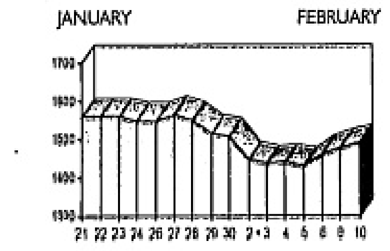
INTEREST RATES

February 10, 2004-MART1 Rates Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 10-Feb-04	MART1 9-Feb-04
1 Month	6.7446	6.7554
3 Months	6.8214	6.8786
6 Months	8.0946	8.0673
1 Year	8.9232	8.9018
2 Years	9.6883	9.695
3 Years	10.5483	10.5433
4 Years	10.8533	10.8533
5 Years	11.2333	11.2317
7 Years	11.515	11.5383
10 Years	11.8033	11.7911
20 Years	12.1517	12.13
25 Years	12.4483	12.48

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Bargain-hunting lifts stocks

STOCKS, led by leading phone firm PLDT and second-ranked Globe Telecom Inc., closed higher for the third straight session yesterday on further bargain-hunting in select blue chips.

Analysts said political concerns were easing somewhat as campaigning for the May 10 general election began yesterday with presidential candidates at their charming best to win votes.

"Somehow the picture is becoming clearer with all of them expected to bare their economic platforms," said AB Capital economic analyst Jose Vistan.

PLDT was the most active stock as it rose 1.06 percent or P10 to P950. PLDT's turnover of P139 million accounted for about a quarter of the market's total.

Globe, a unit of local conglomerate Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecommunications Ltd,, gained 1.13 percent or P10 to P895.

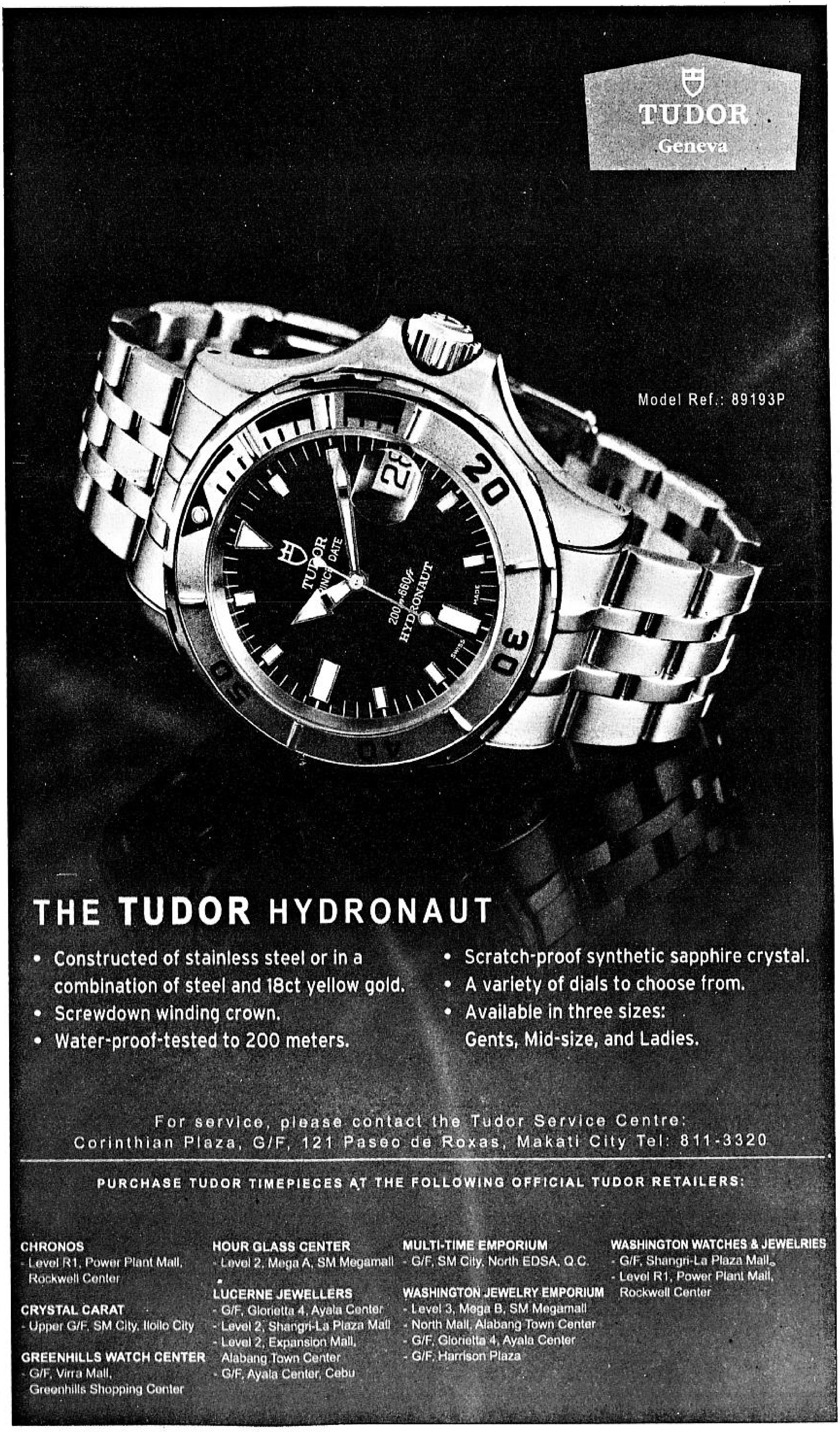
"Foreign buyers are aligning their portfolios. Most are underweight on the Philippines and they have to diversify their holdings," said Vistan.

The main index ended 11.6 points or 0.8 percent higher at 1,490.21 points. It is up 3.32 percent so far this year.

Turnover dipped to just under P543 million from Monday's P856 million. Gainers beat losers 28 to 13 and there were 35 stocks unchanged.

Analysts said they expected the index to move within a tight range of 1,430 to 1,500 points as players wait for more political developments.

Pilipino Telephone Corp. (Piltel), the third-largest mobile firm and 45-percent owned by PLDT, rose 1.56 percent or 2 centavos to P1.30. *Reuters*



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HOUR GLASS CENTER
- Level 2, Mega A, SM Megamall

LUCERNE JEWELLERS
- G/F, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center
- Level 2, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
- Level 2, Expansion Mall, Alabang Town Center
- G/F, Ayala Center, Cebu

MULTI-TIME EMPORIUM
- G/F, SM City, North EDSA, Q.C.

WASHINGTON JEWELRY EMPORIUM
- Level 3, Mega B, SM Megamall
- North Mall, Alabang Town Center
- G/F, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center
- G/F, Harrison Plaza

WASHINGTON WATCHES & JEWELRIES
- G/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
- Level R1, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center

Investors still keen on RP

CHRISTINE Legarde, global executive chair of Baker & McKenzie, one of the world's largest law firms, said local businessmen should shun dire predictions about the economy since investors still regard the Philippines as an attractive area.

Legarde believes that the perceived instability of the peso, the issues raised during the electoral campaign and even the rising interest rates would not pose much of a problem for investors.

She stressed that while many investors were betting on China, there was still a lot of interest in the Philippines, and more investments were on the way.

Legarde oversees the operations of Baker & McKenzie's international network of 66 offices in 36 countries. Its Philippine affiliate, Quisumbing Torres, represents a number of big corporations in the country.

In batting for the Philippines, the French lawyer said the people of the Philippines have potential purchasing power in the short-, medium- and long-term. This, according to Legarde, provides the most valid reason to invest in the country.

Legarde noted that while many people were alarmed over the peace and order problem here, she said it was not really an issue since terrorism was an international problem that concerns all countries and all countries have their own share of peace and order problems.

The Baker & McKenzie executive visited the country recently to grace the 40th anniversary of the Quisumbing Torres law firm, an affiliate in the Philippines.

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EFFICIENT REFINING PROCESS

Asean eyes uniform fuel standards

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SOUTHEAST Asian governments have started talks on the possible rationalization of fuel specifications, which is seen to help make the oil refining business more efficient, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said yesterday.

In a forum of oil industry players sponsored by the Philippine Institute of Petroleum and the Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association, Perez said the country had taken the lead in the discussions, which started in October last year.

"Right now, countries in the region have different standards on the maximum allowable sulfur and benzene content of fuels," the official explained.

He said the governments of Association of Southeast Asian Nations member-states might consider a uniform set of standards, which would make oil refineries in the region run more efficiently.

"This matter will be taken up at the Asean Ministers of Energy Meeting later this year when the Philippines will assume chairmanship of the (body)," Perez said.

The different fuel specifications have rendered local refiners vulnerable to competition with larger and more advanced refineries overseas.

Overseas refiners have the edge since many of them were configured to produce fuels that are compliant with the recently implemented stricter standards of the Clean Air Act.

In January 2003, the maximum allowed benzene and aromatic content of gasoline was reduced to 35 percent, from 40 percent.

Starting last month, diesel products sold in the country were required to contain not more than 0.05 percent sulfur from the previous maximum of 0.2 percent.

As a result, local refiners were forced to import additives that would make locally refined fuels compliant to the law, or import compliant products.

Also, Caltex Philippines Inc. announced last September that it was shutting down its refinery in Batangas as it "had reached its useful economic life amid the rise of bigger and more modern refineries in the region.

Instead, Caltex said it was pouring in P750 million to convert the refinery into an oil terminal to hold imported products.

In a separate interview, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum president Edgar Chua said the company was evaluating the status of its refining operations each year.

"If things go bad, we will (stop refining). If things go better, we will continue," Chua said. "But our refining operations is in a difficult situation."

Phaseout of home appliances using CFC starts

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Product Standards is set to order the phaseout of environmentally harmful home appliances, or those that contain chlorofluorocarbon (CFC).

The BPS, an attached agency of the Department of Trade and Industry, said the scheduled phaseout would come after its technical committees have finished the formulation of the Philippine National Standards (PNS) for these products. When implemented, the standards should be met by manufacturers of refrigerators, freezers, room air-conditioners and mobile air-conditioners.

The standards will specify the requirements in manufacturing, preparation and labeling of products to ensure that they are free from CFC.

According to Trade and Industry Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr., the BPS formulated 21 standards for the PNS.

In line with the formulation of the standards, the BPS held public consultations with representatives from consumer organizations, industry associations, academe, professional organizations, testing laboratories and government offices.

"In the development and finalization of the standards, the DTI made sure that a consensus was arrived at by all stakeholders," Cristobal said in a statement.

The National CFC Phaseout program is an offshoot of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, which the Philippines signed last year. The four-year international program, government agencies agree to reduce and eventually refrain from the importation, use, distribution and sale of ozone-depleting substances, such as the CFC.

CFCs are halogenated carbons that contain chlorine, fluorine and carbon-elements that significantly harm the ozone layer. CFCs are commonly used as refrigerants—or cooling agents—for room air-conditioners, mobile air-conditioners, vehicles, refrigerators and freezers.

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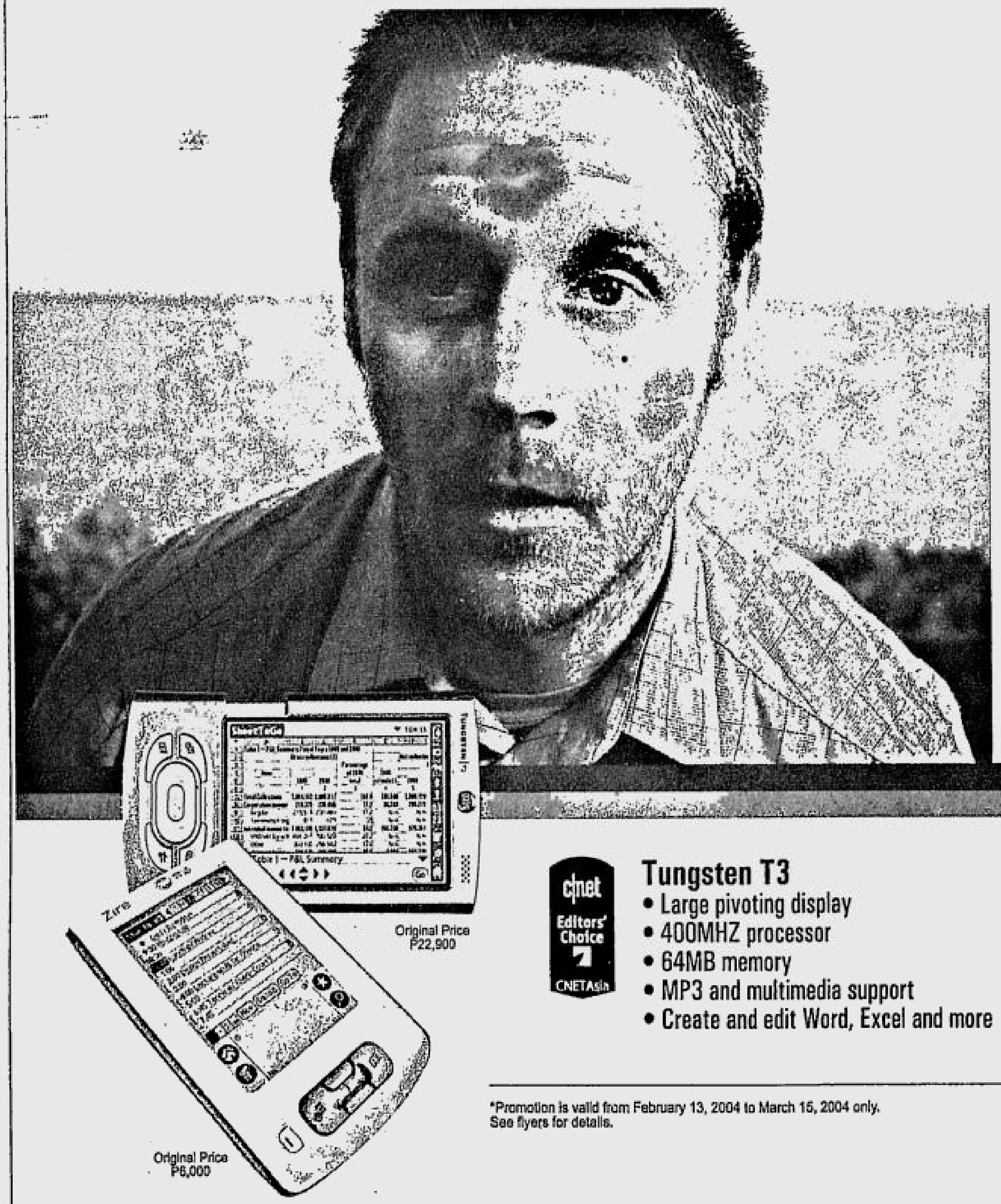

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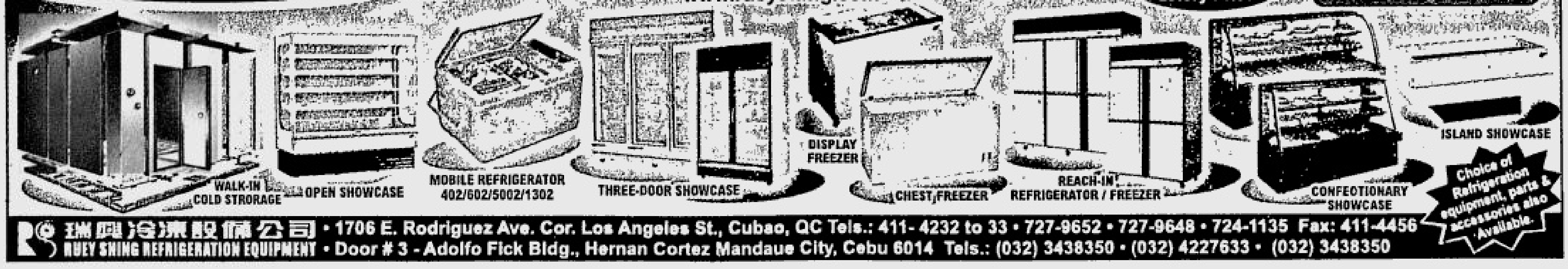

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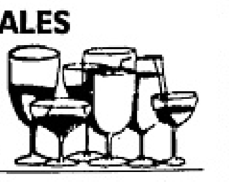

Victor C. Agustin

STOCK market players have lately been bidding up PLDT, probably encouraged by the buying support given by no less than PLDT president/CEO Manuel V. Pangilinan himself.

MVP disclosed last week he acquired two blocks of 1,000 shares of the company in the first month of the year; his chief counsel, Ray Espinosa, likewise picked up 1,000 shares for himself, days ahead of his boss, on the first trading day of the year.

Unlike the target-inducing P1,400/share he paid when he acquired also 2,000 shares in October, MVP this time acquired the two blocks at market rates of P896.25 and P931.50. Espinosa paid higher, P1,020/share.

Yesterday, Philippine Long Distance Telephone closed at P950, P40 up from Friday's close.

Over at Chinabank, taipan Henry Sy Sr. appears sewing up his hold within the contested bank.

Tatang had acquired 3,600 more shares of Chinabank last month, while the family's Sysmart Corp. bought another 3,600 shares also last month.

If our calculations were correct, the combined Sy holdings, direct and indirect, would have now reached 9,247,834 shares, or 30.367 percent of Chinabank's total issued and outstanding shares.

Chinabank, incidentally, places Tatang's combined bank holdings much higher, at 38.4 percent as of last shareholders' meeting. The figure does not include the 8.079-percent bloc that Taiwanese bank ICBC sold to rumored Sy nominee companies.

And if the stock market punters were correct, a game of musical chairs would be played within the Dee-Yuchengco controlled bank come next stockholders' meeting in June, even earlier than the heralded conclusion of the Equitable PCIBank acquisition, also by Sy, that now seems to have been stuck in suspended animation.

Civic consciousness

HONDA's two-liter, automatic-only Civic is now available at P900,000 and P950,000 (leather seats). One hundred units are currently in stock.

Honda spokesperson Arnel Doria could not, however, guarantee how long the prices could hold, since the introductory prices have been arrived at using a now way past P54-$1 exchange rate.

Although it would be cheaper to import the Civics as completely built units from, say, Thailand or Japan, the Sta. Rosa plant had to assemble the new Civics because, Doria said, the low volume of local orders would make it uneconomical to re-jig the right-hand drive Honda plants in both Japan and Thailand.

Continental drift

CONTINENTAL Airlines is taking a higher marketing profile these days, highlighting even its new, more pronounced Asian and Filipino meals in a bid to capture a bigger slice of the local and regional markets.

No less than Guam-based vice president for sales and promotions Walter Dias led a group of local travel writers to the award-wining Miascor Catering inside the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Monday to sample the entire course, complete with the appropriate wines.

(In addition to Continental, Miascor is also the in-flight caterer of Asiana Airlines, Royal Brunei, Thai Airways, Gulf Air, and part owner Malaysia Airlines.)

Continental is happy with the initial results of its new, twice-a-week Manila to Saipan direct flights and, given the continuing push from its Philippine general sales agent, the Delgados' Trans Pacific Air Service Corp., is evaluating the numbers as to the proposed revival of its non-stop Manila-to-Honolulu service.

According to the grapevine, the Delgados want to push the envelope even further—twice-a-week non-stop Manila-to-Los Angeles flight, a route currently monopolized by Philippine Airlines, using Continental's new Boeing 777-200 fleet.

If the latter scenario happens, Continental should become the logical airline for the Pinoy-rich market of Texas and Florida, given the shortened flying time and the airline's Houston hub.

Heard through the grapevine

RCBC and Equitable PCIBank are locked in arbitration over the Bankard purchase, after RCBC belatedly found that there had been hidden accounting bombs in the credit card company the Yuchengcos acquired from EPCIB. *(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

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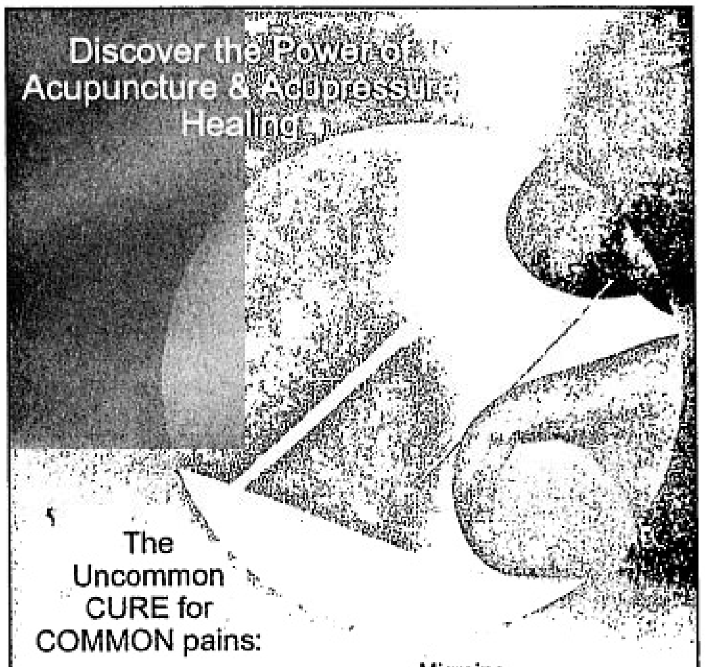
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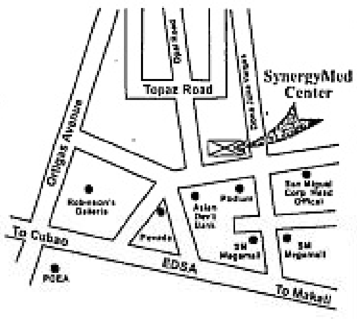

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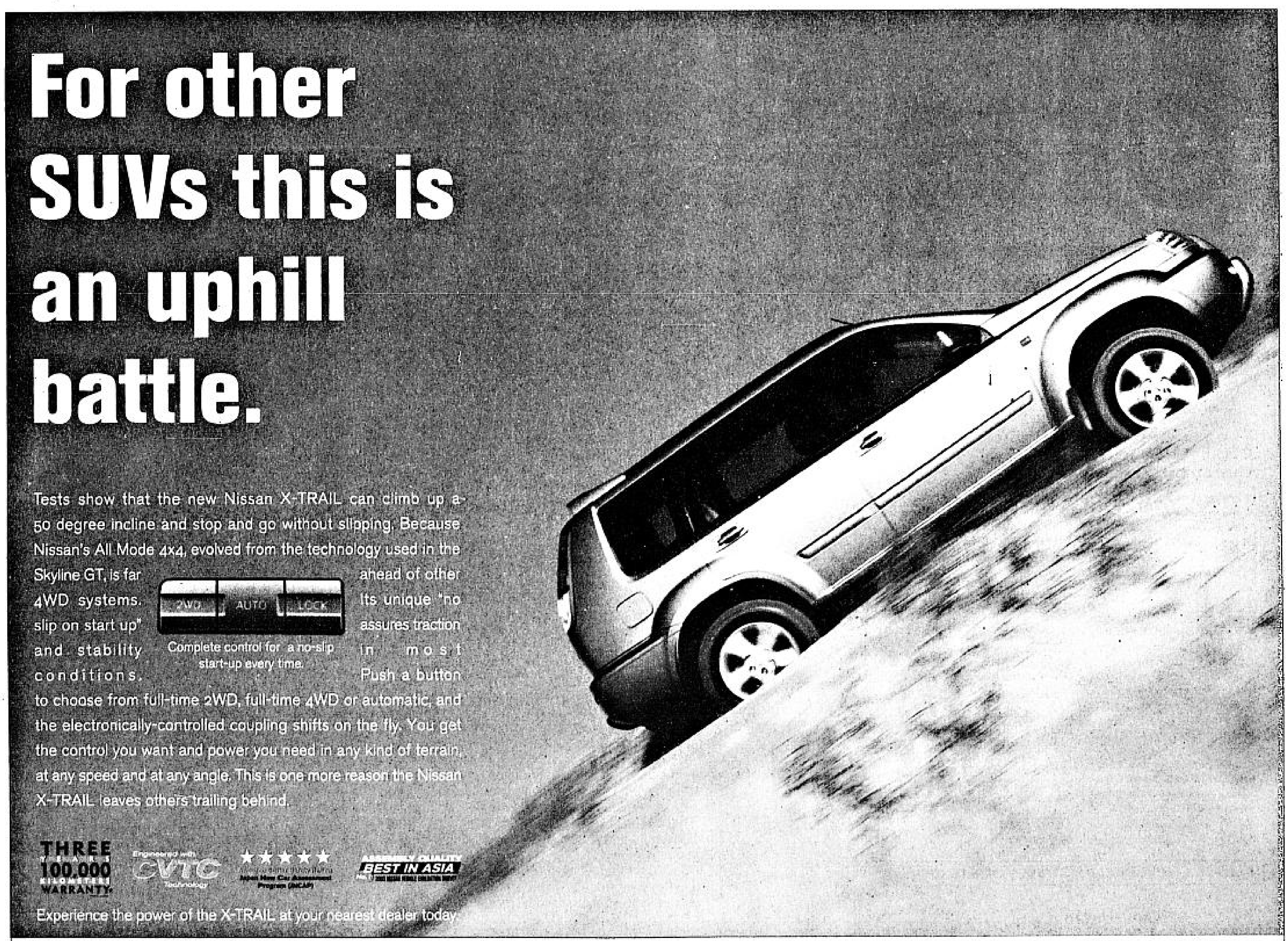
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MANTRADE DEV'T CORP 2278 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City Tel. Nos. 843-3316 to 23, 812-7701, 812-7743, 843-8011
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0520, Series of 2004

Ayala swings to profit in Q4; 2003 net up 28% at ₱3.1B

By Abigail L. Ho

AYALA Corp. posted a 28-percent jump in net income to P3.1 billion in 2003 from P2.4 billion in 2002.

It also marked a return to profit in the fourth quarter after buying a bigger stake in Globe Telecom.

The 169-year-old conglomerate said it had a net income of P903 million in October to December 2003 against a loss of P260 million a year earlier, when it paid off debt and provided for losses at its Burger King franchise.

In a briefing yesterday, Ayala Corp. strategic planning group managing director Rufino Luis Manotok said the profit growth was mainly driven by subsidiaries in the telecommunications, property and banking sectors.

"It was a good year because for the past three years, we were posting profits in the P2-billion range. But this time, we exceeded P3 billion. It's a sign that we've turned the corner," he said.

Revenues soared 21 percent to P37.4 billion in 2003 from P30.9 billion the previous year.

Subsidiaries instrumental in giving Ayala Corp. a 28-percent profit boost included Globe Telecom Inc., Ayala Land Inc., and Bank of the Philippine Islands.

Globe generated a net income of P10.3 billion in 2003, up 50 percent from P6.9 billion in 2002. Service revenues, which included earnings derived from voice calls, short messaging service (SMS) and multimedia messaging service (MMS), grew 20 percent to P47.5 billion.

The cellular service provider likewise sustained its growth momentum, building up its subscriber base to 8.9 million as of end-2003.

The commercial center business as well as high-end residential unit sales continued to fuel the growth of Ayala Land, which posted an 8-percent net income growth to P2.7 billion in 2003.

Manotok said that despite the slump in the property sector, ALI took advantage of the public's good reception of the redeveloped Greenbelt shopping area in Makati to chalk up P3.6 billion in revenues.

Commercial centers contributed 80 percent to the company's rental revenues.

Land sales and high-end residential unit sales likewise increased by 35 percent and 20 percent year-on-year, respectively, bringing in 32 percent of the property firm's total revenues.

BPI registered a 10-percent net income growth to P5.7 billion in 2003. Its return on equity and non-performing loan ratio likewise continued to be the best among local banks at 11.1 percent and 6.5 percent, respectively.

"In many ways, 2003 was a very good year for Ayala. Recurring earnings are driving the improvements in our profitability and with the robust performances of our core businesses and the emerging contribution of AC Capital, we now have four strong pillars for value creation. We are confident that we will be able to carry this positive momentum forward in 2004 and in the years to come," Ayala Corp. president and chief executive Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II said in a statement.

AC Capital, Ayala's developmental division, posted an 87-percent increase in net earnings as companies under the portfolio contributed a total of P1 billion.

These companies included three main operating businesses: Manila Water Co., Integrated Microelectronics Inc., and Ayala Automotive Holdings Corp., which contributed P1.2 billion, P638 million and P316 million in net income, respectively.

PNB firms up pricing of ₱3.8-B tier-2 peso notes

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE National Bank yesterday firmed up the pricing of its Peso Lower Tier 2 notes issuance at 100 percent of face value with a 12.5-percent yield.

The credit spread for the subordinated debt issuance was pegged at 126.83 basis points (equivalent to 1.2683 percentage points) over the five-year Mart 1 fixed-rate treasury note (FXTN).

The issuance was earlier placed at P2.2 billion, but the bank said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that the issue size would be jacked up due to oversubscription.

PNB said the policy-making Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas approved on Feb. 5 the increase of the issue size to P3.8 billion from P2.2 billion.

"The issuance of the notes is to provide lower tier 2 capital, and thus strengthen the capital base of the bank," it said.

The peso-denominated notes are of a 10-year step-up 5 format due to mature in 2014. The debt instrument will be issued in two tranches: Series "A" and Series "B."

The Series "A" notes can only be issued to individuals and tax-exempt institutions, while the Series "B" notes can be transferred to non-eligible noteholders under Series A.

The trust banking group of Equitable PCIBank was appointed public trustee, registry and paying agent for the debt instrument float, while Multinational Investment Bancorporation and ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners Inc. were assigned market makers.

Stockbrokerage JP Morgan Securities Ltd. is the sole arranger for the notes issuance.

Ratings agency Moody's Investors Service Inc. had earlier given the notes a Ba2 rating.

The bank said it would announce on Feb. 16 the settlement date for the notes issuance as well as the actual amount of accepted subscriptions.

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Sarah Boussofiane, Managing Partner, OgilvyOne Tokyo (Invited)

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*Jai Castro, Equitable PCI Bank

" Great Seminar! Hope to get invited again next time."
*Mara Ceguera, CRM Manager, Rustan's

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*CheChe Rivera, AIG Credit Cards

Shell profit seen down 5% in 2003

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PILIPINAS Shell Petroleum Corp. said it posted a net income of about P2.56 billion in 2003, or 5 percent lower than the 2002 figure of P2.7 billion.

In an interview, Shell country chair Edgar Chua said the figure was based on initial estimates as the company would take another month to come up with official and final numbers.

The oil executive said the decrease was due to low pump prices compared to the actual cost of making petroleum products available.

"Crude prices had gone up last year but we were not able to fully recover the rise in costs through adjustments of local prices," Chua said.

This would be the second year in a row that Shell had seen declining profit after it posted a 1.5-percent decrease to P2.7 billion in 2002 from 2.74 billion in 2001.

Shell officials had said the decline in 2002 reflected the company's spending for one-time expenses such as an upgrade of computers and related equipment.

Asked whether Shell's multibillion-peso profit was still considerable, Chua said the amount should be compared to the capital that the company used.

"Our performance for 2003 indicate only a 5-percent return on average capital employed. (What we wish for) is something like 15 percent," he said.

"We have not even made half of (15 percent) in the last five years," he added.

Asked how much Shell was allotting for capital expenditures this year, Chua said the figure was not yet available. "We are doing out computations according to business lines and we have yet to consolidate the data."

However, Chua said in an October interview that Shell was earmarking "the same amount as the capex for 2003 or P2.2 billion."

He said the fund would be used in its continuing projects in the Pandacan oil terminal and in its refinery in Batangas as well as for putting up additional service stations.

He said Shell has about 1,000 existing service stations and planned to put up at least 10 new ones this year.

Shell is undertaking preparations for an initial public offering, which is required under the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act of 1998.

RP launches . . .

From page B1

points. During the pricing of the coming bond issue, the underwriters would add the spread on the prevailing benchmark rate.

The Philippines still has about $800 million worth of securities registered with the US Securities and Exchange Commission. A shelf registration is required before any sovereign bond issue in the global market is to be launched.

The government said it would register another $1.5 billion to address the requirements of the cash-strapped National Power Corp.

The national government might end up issuing bonds for the power firm. In January 2003, the government issued $500 million in 10-year global bonds, half of the proceeds of which were relent to the power firm. In July, the government sold $750 million in 10-year bonds in behalf of Napocor.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 10, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	9,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17	17	17	700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45.5	46.5	45.5	46	1,109,700
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39	39.5	39	39.5	563,700
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.51	0.56	0.51	0.56	1,930,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	27.5	26.5	27	127,000
Prudential Bank	400	400	400	400	2,000
Philippine National Bank	24	24	24	24	8,100
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	10,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	27	27	26.5	26.5	9,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	1,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	185	185	185	185	300
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1515	1515	1515	1515	1,460
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23.5	23.5	23.25	23.25	19,900
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.73	0.74	0.73	0.73	2,320,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	885	910	885	905	47,310
Ipeople Inc.	1.2	1.22	1.18	1.2	120,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	2,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.038	0.039	0.038	0.039	300,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	42,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.3	1.38	1.3	1.3	31,298,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	940	970	940	950	145,450
Ivantage Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19.5	19.75	19.5	19.75	389,400
Manila Electric Co. B	32	32.5	31.5	32	709,800
Petron Corp.	3.2	3.25	3.1	3.2	8,733,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	1	0.95	1	40,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.28	1.3	1.28	1.3	270,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	11,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	300,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	2,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	19	19	18.75	19	3,253,700
Pancake House Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	7,490,000
San Miguel Corp. A	55.5	55.5	55	55.5	35,000
San Miguel Corp. B	69.5	69.5	69	69	106,800
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	470,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	20,000
Ayala Corp.	5.9	6	5.9	5.9	1,617,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.3	273,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1	1	1	1	230,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.58	1.6	1.58	1.6	120,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9	9.5	9	9.5	8,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.59	9,580,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	100,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	100,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23.75	24	23.75	23.75	627,400
Ionics Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	385,000
Keppel Holdings	0.7	0.95	0.7	0.95	63,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.04	1.04	1,241,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	9,370,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	10,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	30,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	1,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	2,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.17	0.17	0.16	0.16	60,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.49	0.49	120,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	110,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	30,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	45,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	23.5	23.75	23.5	23.5	202,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	10,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.8	5,519,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	190,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	4,150,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.1	6,646,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	120,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	1,723,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	650,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	310,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	400,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	3,772,760	81,563,270 00
Comm'l & Ind'l	92,912,360	447,322,617 20
PRO	18,648,000	51,325,500 00
Mining	1,360,000	386,700 00
GRAND TOTALS :	116,693,120	580,598,087 20

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	445.65	UP 4 87
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,296.79	UP 19 40
PRO	550.08	DOWN 1 35
Mining	1,536.78	UNCH 0 00
OIL	1.29	UNCH 0 00
SME	100.00	UNCH 0 00
All Shares Index	945.96	UP 3 64
Composite	1,490.21	UP 11 86

NO. OF ADVANCES: 28, NO. OF DECLINES: 13, NO. OF UNCHANGED: 35, NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 76
NO. OF TRADES: 2,265

DISCLOSURES

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission approved the change in the name of William, Gothong and Aboitiz Inc. to Aboitiz Transport System Corp.

* * *

SUPERCITY Realty Development Corp. informed the Philippine Stock Exchange that its application to the Construction Industry Association of the Philippines was approved.

* * *

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. will hold its analysts' briefing on February 17, 1 p.m. at the Frugality and Excellence meeting rooms, 32/F of Jollibee Plaza, Ortigas Centre, Pasig City.

* * *

AYALA Land Inc. will hold its analysts' briefing on February 12, 3 p.m. at the Executive Lounge, 25/F of Tower One, Ayala Triangle, Makati City. Also, the venue of its annual stockholders' meeting was changed to Rizal Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

* * *

UNIVERSAL Rightfield Property Holdings Inc. disclosed the resignation of Noel Laman as director, Zenaida Salipsip as corporate secretary and Teodulo San Juan Jr. as assistant corporate secretary.

* * *

BANK of the Philippine Islands announced that stockholders of record as of February 24 would be entitled to notice of and to vote at its annual stockholders' meeting on March 25. ***Compiled by Maricar D.Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

February 10, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.787526	1.000000	55.901000
Japan	Yen	0.007456	0.009468	0.529300
United Kingdom	Pound	1.464010	1.859000	103.920000
Hongkong	Dollar	0.101381	0.128733	7.196300
Switzerland	Franc	0.637466	0.809454	45.249300
Canada	Dollar	0.593240	0.753296	42.110000
Singapore	Dollar	0.468208	0.594530	33.234800
Australia	Dollar	0.610580	0.775314	43.340800
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.089038	2.652661	148.286400
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.210007	0.266667	14.907000
Brunei	Dollar	0.466820	0.592768	33.136300
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000094	0.000119	0.006700
Thailand	Baht	0.020193	0.025641	1.433400
UAE	Dirham	0.214421	0.272272	15.220300
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.269800	70.983100
Argentina	Peso	0.268094	0.340426	19.030200
Brazil	Real	0.268871	0.341413	19.085300
Denmark	Kroner	0.134227	0.170442	9.527900
India	Rupee	0.017442	0.022148	1.238100
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.207266	0.263186	14.712400
Mexico	New Peso	0.070869	0.089989	5.030500
New Zealand	Dollar	0.547653	0.695410	38.874100
Norway	Kroner	0.115142	0.146207	8.173100
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013775	0.017492	0.977800
South Africa	Rand	0.113313	0.143885	8.043300
Korea	Won	0.000675	0.000857	0.047900
Sweden	Kroner	0.109692	0.139287	7.786300
Syria	Pound	0.015291	0.019417	1.085400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023792	0.030211	1.688800
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000494	0.000627	0.035000

Honda expects higher sales this year

By Michelle V. Remo

HONDA Cars Philippines Inc. said it was expecting its sales this year to increase to 17,000 units, given the expected improvement in the business climate.

Honda president Mitsunari Takano said the company was expecting that the new excise tax law would impact positively on its sales. He explained that lower prices brought about by the new tax would boost demand for vehicles.

Honda, the country's second largest seller of passenger cars next to Toyota Motor Philippines Corp., sold 15,300 vehicles last year. Of which, 5,544 units were passenger cars.

The excise tax law, which took effect in October last year, shifted the basis of the excise tax computation from engine to price. The move lowered the taxes on certain vehicles, including several Honda models.

The introduction of the 2004 Civic, which was launched Monday, is also expected to help Honda achieve its higher sales forecast. Takano said the production of new car models was Honda's way of helping the automotive industry improve its competitiveness.

The 2004 Civic caters to customers who prefer luxurious sedans. The 2004 Civic comes in eight variants, whose prices range from P730,000 to P965,000.

With the new model, Takano said Honda was hoping to double its sales of Civic to 4,000 this year from less than 2,000 units in 2003.

"We want to move the industry forward, and we are striving to soon become the market leader," Takano told reporters.

The company official said Honda had kept its goal of selling completely built-up units to foreign markets when sales from the domestic market was big enough to support exports.

7-year T-bond yield up 43 bps

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE COST of the government's seven-year borrowings went up by 42.7 basis points to 11.361 percent in yesterday's auction that saw lower than usual bids.

Last month, yields on 7-year treasury bonds averaged at 10.934 percent.

The tenders for the bond issue reached only P5.207 billion and the government gave a partial award of only P1.647 billion. Last month, bids for the 7-year debt papers reached almost P10 billion.

Deputy Treasurer Mina Figueroa said the market was still liquid but it had been reacting to the central bank decision last week to increase the reserve requirement on bank deposits and deposit substitutes to 19 percent from 17 percent.

"The BSP action is expected to siphon off about P30 billion. Although the banks are still liquid, they have to adjust to the initial shock," said the deputy treasurer.

Figueroa said the auction committee decided to accept the bids that were reasonable and were at par with the secondary market rate of about 11.5 percent.

"We hope the market got the message that we will accept only reasonable bids. We don't want to reject all the bids because that will penalize even those that are behaving," said the deputy treasurer.

Treasury bill yields and bond rates have been going up in the last two weeks, partly because of political uncertainties. Once the jitters have eased, the government said the cost of its borrowings would also stabilize.

In the first quarter of the year, the Treasury is planning to sell a total of P11 billion worth of treasury bills and P4.5 billion of treasury bonds from last year's volume of P9 billion and P3 billion, respectively.

Figueroa said banks continued to hold huge amount of cash but they did not have enough investment options. The lack of private sector borrowers may force banks to continue placing their excess liquidity in risk-free government securities.

The government projected that the 91-day rate would average between 7.5 and 8.5 percent this year. The central bank had kept the overnight policy rates at 6.75 percent for borrowing and 9 percent for lending.

The deputy treasurer said that sustaining fiscal discipline this year would be a key in keeping local interest rates stable.

The budget gap in 2003 reached P199.86 billion, against a P202-billion target.

For this year, the budget deficit ceiling was placed at P197.8 billion.

The government's ability to meet its fiscal target influences local rates as it lessens investors' risks in buying the debt papers.

Court order seen boosting BF case vs BSP

BANCO Filipino claimed it had moved closer to collecting its damage claim against the defunct Central Bank with the Makati Regional Trial Court's ruling on Jan. 27 that stated that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas was the successor-in-interest of the old central bank.

In a statement, the bank said the order had set the stage for the BSP to finally settle the more than P18.8 billion in damage claim of Banco Filipino.

The Makati RTC ruled that "the transfer of assets from the central bank to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas while these cases were pending before this court constitutes the latter as a transferee pendente lite."

"This means that the BSP is fully responsible for the payment of Banco Filipino's damage claims," said lawyer Francis Rivera, BF executive vice president.

The bank's claim stemmed from the alleged illegal closure of Banco Filipino in 1985. The bank was first placed under conservatorship in 1984, subsequently closed and placed under receivership in January 1985, and ordered liquidated in March 1985. The bank challenged these moves by instituting civil cases numbers 8108, 9675 and 10183 with the regional trial court of Makati City. The Supreme Court subsequently ordered these cases consolidated.

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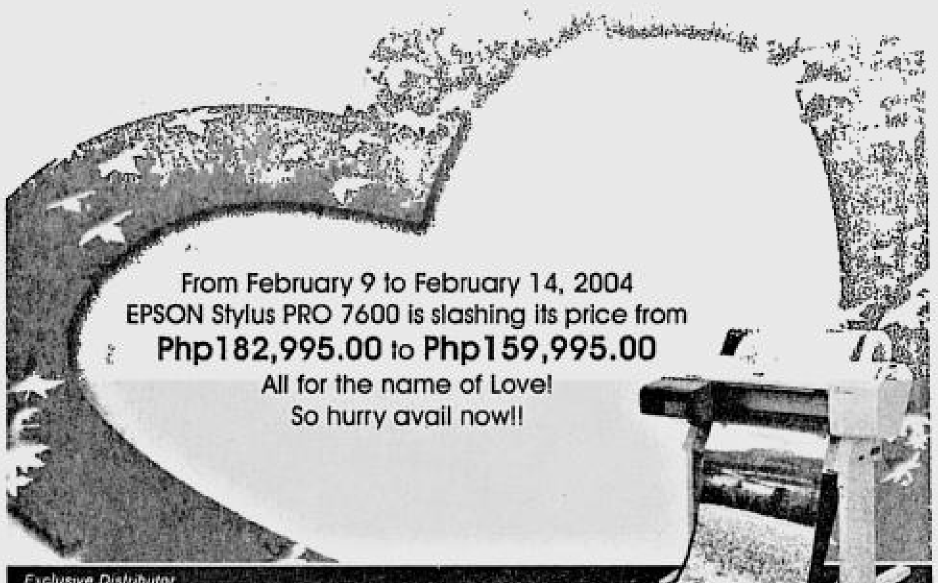

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It would be a pity if you didn't look at the Lange 1 movement with a magnifying glass.

But you certainly don't need one to read its patented outsize date.

The Lange 1's balance-cock.
Lange's inimitable watchmaking skill in magnification: free-hand cutting by a master engraver makes every balance-cock unmistakably unique, and the patented whiplash precision index adjuster combines the aesthetic beauty of superb craftsmanship with Lange's watchmaking ingenuity. The result is technical and artistic perfection of a degree which can only be found in Lange watches.
The balance-cock full size:

The Lange 1 with outsize date.
One of mechanical watchmaking's most strikingly useful inventions allows for a date display three times the size of those on conventional wristwatches. The patented double-disc mechanism with over 40 individual components may be the most significant contemporary watchmaking innovation. This mechanism, and the distinctive twin mainspring barrels for three day's power reserve with indicator, makes for an unprecedented watchmaking masterpiece. The Lange 1 is available in 18-carat gold or in platinum.

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UBX 30 UBX

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THE UBIX MANAGEMENT TEAM

From left, Lyn A. Vergara, SAVP, Compufax and furniture division; Gigi P. Mercado, AVP, customer service; Edilberto B. Bravo, chair and CEO; Vida C. Ty, president and COO; Joe C. Gondra, SAVP, Ubix Digital Printshop Corp. and Edgardo M. Malinao, SAVP sales.

Good product, good sales force

THE SUCCESS of U-BIX is anchored principally on its twin forces: "A good product to sell and a good team who know how to sell it."

Thus said Vida Ty, a key figure of U-BIX Corporation since its inception, who has assumed the position of president in 2003.

Ty has seen how the company grew from a team of less than 20 employees during its first year to its present manpower of 800. You include the U-BIX's affiliate companies and branches nationwide, the work force could number no less than 2,000.

"Without good employees, we wouldn't be a successful company," Ty said. "Hard work is a primary requirement."

Ty said a good employee must learn how to absorb the company culture, which is the pursuit of "excellence and quality customer service." If an employee fits the company's required work attitude, the opportunities for growth at U-BIX are almost unlimited. For people like Ty, who had been with the company since Day One, the work may be demanding but it has always been "amply rewarded."

On a quarterly basis, U-Bix personnel are awarded for exemplary effort with a certificate of recognition given at the Achievers' Dinner. At the end of the year, these people are again recognized with a plaque of achievement for 12 months of consistent hard work. Efforts for excellence are never left unnoticed.

VIDA. C. Ty, President and COO

The Awards Night has become a big event for the employees. It motivates them to work even harder, and often makes them discover their own potentials.

Individual goals are encouraged as much as team play. In fact, each must nurture his/her goals to prosper in U-BIX. When an employee shows signs of progress, he/she immediately gets recognition.

Ty is the supreme example.

Starting as an accountant in 1974, Ty rose steadily from the ranks through her sheer splendid work ethic. She went into multitasking and, eventually, she caught the eye of top management and would soon receive recognition for her skills other than her accounting expertise. By reaching the top, Ty proved that anybody can nail those dreams.

"One can't be one-track minded," Ty said. "At U-BIX, the eagerness to learn and acquire new skills are key factors for an employee to scale the ladder of success."

Individual goals are encouraged as much as team play. In fact, each must nurture his or her goals to prosper in U-Bix. When an employee shows signs of progress to that end, he or she is immediately tapped for such a purpose.

ION
Konica OKAMURA
Multi-Function Dr.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION:

The company's lifeblood

Ubix's unique corporate culture comes from the premise that "service is our business." More than just selling copiers, printers and office equipment, U-BIX also puts premium on after-sales service.

FOR U-BIX Corporation, the correct way to nurture lasting relationships with customers is to put the interest of customers first at all times. This has been the reason why U-BIX Corporation has been in the business for 30 years.

Since its birth in 1974, the company has been guided by the principle, "The customer is our real boss." said Edilberto B. Bravo, the U-BIX founder: "Without our customers, we are nothing."

U-Bix's unique corporate culture comes from the premise that "service is our business." More than just selling copiers, printers and office equipment, U-BIX also puts premium on after-sales service.

Through the years, U-BIX has continued to expand its products and services. It now sells/distributes Konica copiers, Epson printers, Okamura office furniture, and Riso digital duplicating machines. The unprecedented growth has been traced to the corporation's robust respect for the wishes of its customers: quality service, rain or shine.

2 hours and '7 to 7 x 7'

U-BIX has not stopped amazing customers with its innovative measures, including "the two-hour response time," a benchmark of the corporation's dedication to its customers.

When a customer buys or rents machines from the company, the contract guarantees the consumer of lifetime free service warranty. Once a call for servicing is made, it arrives in less than two hours.

"So far, the service team is able to maintain a rating of not lower than 90 percent," said Edgardo Malinao, SAVP on sales. "The rating has reached as high as 99 percent."

U-BIX services clients on a "7 to 7 x 7" basis. That means a technical service team is guaranteed to come to the aid of any customer from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., 7 days a week, including Sundays and holidays.

"Our engineers are trained to constantly keep in touch with clients regarding the condition of the items bought from U-BIX," Malinao said.

A copier, for example, requires a monthly preventive maintenance. The U-BIX technical team makes it a point to attend to each and every client, even if they don't receive calls from them.

Furthermore, U-BIX doesn't have to necessarily make the sale first before making the promise of better service. The U-BIX brand of service is introduced even before the sales team makes the sale, as this offer is included in the initial proposals to client.

"That kind of contact allows customer service officers to attend to customers' needs promptly," said Gigi Mercado, assistant vice president for customer service. "We become more responsive because of the personal approach and we get instant feedback on how to further improve our service."

But U-BIX doesn't stop there. The customer service department distributes survey forms to clients 90-days after the machine is installed, to see if there are any concerns and to make sure that these are immediately addressed.

Just recently, U-BIX implemented a 24-hour hotline especially for clients who have non-stop operations.

In this 30th anniversary of U-BIX, Mr. Bravo, or EBB as his employees and peers fondly refer to him, reiterates U-BIX's unwavering commitment of quality service to its clients. "Our record speaks for itself," said EBB. "Our 30 years in the business is a living proof of how well we've covered the spectrum of our clients' satisfaction ratio."

E.B. BRAVO SPEAKS

'My interest lay elsewhere'

Excerpts from a book being written on U-BIX "Winning Hearts Through Customer Service".

"AS A YOUNG man growing up in Roxas City, it was my dream to become a lawyer and a litigator. In high school, I remember putting in as my favorite motto, "The word is mightier than the sword." So, I went to the UP Law School, putting my heart and soul in honing my written and verbal skills.

My efforts paid off. I became Features Editor of the Philippine Collegian, Editor of the UP Law Register, and captain of the (Day) Debating Team of the UP College of Law for three consecutive years.

I also participated actively in the political and academic life of the University by serving as Vice-President of the Student Council of the College of Law. I was admitted into the Order of the Purple Feather, the honor society of the UP College of Law.

If I dreamed of becoming a lawyer, how did I end up in the business sector?

I am inclined to believe that I was born with natural instincts and a liking for business. In short, I've always been awed by the challenge of business, its risks and opportunities. Just to show an example of what I mean. My parents were both professionals

INTEREST/ C30

E.B. Bravo speaks...

From page B6

and, as their first born, there was no need for me to earn a living while attending elementary school. But there I was, a boy barely in my teens, pounding the streets of Roxas City and jumping on and off the commuter trains selling newspapers.

Looking back, I almost did not complete my law studies because I got engrossed in what started out as a part time sales job selling mutual funds. After a year, the company, Filipinas Mutual Fund, made me Training Director and Head of promotions, a post that took me to different parts of the country.

It was then that I quit law school. Sales interested me because I found similarities between it and the practice of law. To be successful, both needed the elements of thorough understanding of the product or case, and the ability to persuade the buyer or the judge.

I did go back to the UP College of Law and, in 1961, passed the Bar with the score of 82.25%.

Immediately after graduation and before the bar results came out, Ponce Enrile, Siguion Reyna, Montecillo & Belo Law Office took me in. I practiced law for three years before I decided to give it up because I realized that my interest lay elsewhere.

I went back to UP and took up MBA. While studying for my MBA, I taught in three schools. At Philippine Women's University, I taught Marketing and Sales. I taught Negotiable Instruments at the UP College of Business and Negotiable Instruments and Credit at the Ateneo Business Leadership Program.

Still, these experiences did not lead me straight into my own business. The world of banking beckoned. Citibank hired me in 1964 as an executive trainee in its Executive Training Program. For those aspiring to become bankers, that was the dream program. It was an honor to be in that program, for two reasons. First, we all received a quantum leap in our salaries. Second, I became part of the circle that produced the leading lights in the banking industry.

Nine months after I was hired, I was made an officer. I stayed with Citibank for five years and became Head of Credit for the Philippine branches. It was 1969.

U-BIX founders Atty. Ike Belo and Atty. Bert Bravo: A strong partnership and solid friendship through the years.

By then, I thought I had acquired sufficient knowledge and skills to prepare me to go on my own.

So, in July 1969, my wife, Fel, and I decided to form our small business, Bookhaven, dealing in office supplies, particularly, paper products.

With added capitalization and credit support from Atty. Ike Belo, we incorporated Bookhaven, Inc. It was during this period that Ike Belo gave his utmost help to ensure Bookhaven's and later, U-BIX's success. He openly endorsed our products and services to his friends and clients; he also guaranteed most of our credit facilities. I hasten to add that in 35 years of my partnership with Ike Belo, Ike and I have never quarelled over financial or any business matters. He remains to this day, my best friend, mentor and partner. As a testament to that, my one and only son, I named after him: Enrique.

Bookhaven's biggest customer at that time was the industry giant in copying machines. It was a satisfactory relationship until rumors started flying that this international company was planning to centralize its paper procurement. Consequently, I felt threatened. In hindsight, it was opportunity disguised as a threat and it galvanized me into action. I religiously browsed through trade magazines until I came across an article that announced the introduction of the Konica U-BIX copying machines that used plain paper. I knew it was a sure winner and so, I immediately traveled to Japan with the hope of convincing Konica Corporation to assign me as the exclusive distributor in the Philippines. It took a year to convince Konica that I was the right person for them. The one who made that decision was Hiroshi Tamura, then Manager of the U-BIX Department of Mitsubishi Corporation in Tokyo.

After that, it was time to form a new company. Once again, Atty. Ike Belo agreed to a partnership in the firm. Incidentally, Atty. Ike Belo stayed on as partner and Chairman of the Board all throughout these years. With P100,000 in my pocket, I registered U-BIX Corporation on February 11, 1974. Even then, I was sure of U-BIX copier and thus made it also my trade name.

There couldn't be a much wiser business decision for me than that.

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2nd Place Diffun Credit & Development Cooperative
>Diffun, Quirino
3rd Place Tayabas Community Multi-Purpose Cooperative
>Tayabas, Quezon
4th Place Landan People's Multi-Purpose Cooperative
>Polomolok, South Cotabato
5th Place Emmanuel Multi-Purpose Cooperative
>Cuenca, Batangas

NON AGRI-BASED CATEGORY
1st Place Nueva Vizcaya Alay Kapwa Multi-Purpose Cooperative
>Solano, Nueva Vizcaya
2nd Place Novaliches Development Cooperative
>Novaliches, Quezon City
3rd Place San Dionisio Credit Cooperative
>San Dionisio, Parañaque City
4th Place Dingle Government Workers Credit Cooperative
>Dingle, Iloilo
5th Place Five Star Savings & Credit Development Cooperative
>Gamu, Isabela

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ARAMARK, a $9.4 billion company, is a world leader in providing managed services – including food, facility and other support services and uniform and career apparel. ARAMARK has leadership positions serving the business, education, healthcare, government and sports and recreation segments. In FORTUNE Magazine's 2003 survey of the "Most Admired Companies in America," ARAMARK ranks No. 1 in the outsourcing services category and is No. 10 among all companies included in the survey by overall score as evaluated by peers within the industry. Headquartered in Philadelphia, ARAMARK has approximately 200,000 employees serving clients in 18 countries.

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ServiceMaster wins prestigious ISO award

SERVICEMASTER has recently received the prestigious International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9001:2000 certification, a most coveted award in the corporate world of manpower services. Becoming an ISO 9001:2000 certified company means that ServiceMaster will work even harder to provide better service to their clients.

The Service Master Company is a worldwide service outfit based in the United States. It mainly provides professional facilities management services whose main line of business is housekeeping and janitorial services, residential and commercial cleaning services, carpet and upholstered furniture shampooing, building maintenance, ground care, and many more.

ServiceMaster was introduced in the country on Oct. 22, 1996, with the Facilities Managers Inc. (FMI) as the master franchisee.

With its winning the ISO certification, ServiceMaster had scored a major victory over its rival companies. "ISO certified companies are given added points for value added services," said FMI general manager Ding Doplayna. "The recognition has increased the pride and morale of all employees of ServiceMaster."

More than anything else, the ISO certification proved that ServiceMaster is always prepared to give quality service to its clients on a consistent basis.

Doplayna stressed that a big chunk of the credit for its success goes to team effort. "What our team did is to show to the certifying body that we are implementing these Quality Management Systems and we are continuously improving the system for the satisfaction of our customers,"

The ServiceMaster management program basically trains, equips, motivates, and develops employees in various service duties areas.

"The management team conducts job skill training and review sessions with the facility personnel," said Doplayna. "This allows the people to become more efficient, effective and productive."

All ServiceMaster components and processes are designed and tested by people behind ServiceMaster to ensure that quality is not sacrificed.

The overall control of the management program is retained by the customers themselves. Its process control programs are jointly designated by the facility management and the ServiceMaster management team. Constant monitoring of the process is achieved through supervision reports, facility inspections and joint review sessions. Continuous improvement is assured with a ServiceMaster program.

ServiceMaster has established the Facilities Management Academy, a TESDA certified institution to train its own people on "Building Cleaning and Maintenance Course" for one month. U-BIX Corporation has provided the first FMA training center in its Sucat compound in 2000.

The academy's training has two short courses: 1) Basic building and cleaning services and maintenance and, 2) Advanced course in leadership skills development.

For the personnel at ServiceMaster, the ISO award is but the beginning of many more beautiful things to come for the company in the near future-and beyond.

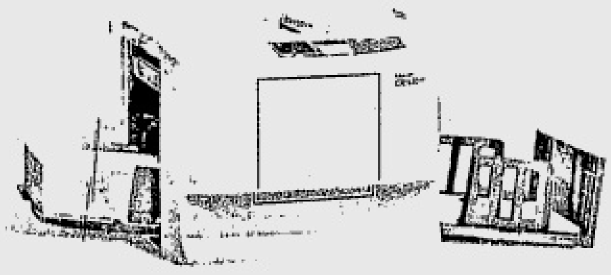
TAKEN during the closing meetings where the lead auditor Carmina Espiron discussed the audit result. Col. Ding Doplayna, FMI general manager accepts the audit report.

> ServiceMaster has established the Facilities Management Academy, a TESDA certified institution to train its own people on "Building Cleaning and Maintenance Course" for one month.

U-BIX. 30 years na? Ang bilis talaga!

I would like to extend my congratulations to U-BIX Corporation on its 30th Anniversary. May this important milestone in your company's history be an indication of a more fruitful partnersip with us, and may it be a prelude to many more successful years to come.

Akira Hayama
Akira Hayama
President & CEO
Riso Kagaku Corporation



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Enter *merry maids*. The home expert group

JANUARY 2004 marked the entry of MerryMaids in the Philippines under the flagship of JollyMaids Inc - the latest subsidiary in the UBIX group of companies. Bringing MerryMaids into the country meant taking advantage of 25 years of MerryMaids experience and leadership in home cleaning in 7 countries. Audited financial data of all home cleaning companies in the USA shows MerryMaids' sales is more than the combined sales of the other competitors.

Vilma Bravo, who trained at MerryMaids, USA for almost a month on the cleaning processes and operations of MM says, "Home cleaning is all about thorough cleaning at the shortest time, all the time. When MerryMaids leaves a home, the owner can be sure that her home is clean, looks clean and smells clean." All these should not be at the expense of the environment, though. Bravo adds that all MerryMaids cleaning products passed the US government's environmental safety requirements and that the MerryMaids teams always carry with them the Materials Safety Data Sheet.

Has the time of professional cleaners come?

Can the MerryMaids concept - hiring on-call teams of professional home cleaners - work in a country like the Philippines where the "all-around live-in maid" is the rule? Is MerryMaids service affordable? Bravo responds, "Budgetary concerns is a very relevant issue. Who cares how thorough we are if the homeowner thinks MerryMaids is beyond her pocket's reach? So, we help her with the arithmetic. How much does she pay her live-in maid? How much does she spend for the maid's food and utilities? How much does she spend for cleaning supplies and equipment? How much would she pay to be free from emotional distress that comes from unsatisfactory work? How much would she pay to have free time to spend on people and activities that she also values? Is home cleaning her forte? "

With a tight budget, Bravo helps with the decision-making process by pointing other alternatives like suggesting that rooms that are seldom used need not be cleaned weekly. "This is why a home survey is so important. Having seen a home in person allows us ways to suggest how to cut home cleaning time, which is the basis of the MerryMaids fee.

Bravo points out that MerryMaids has other value added services, such as deep cleaning of carpets, upsholstered furniture, cushions and bed mattresses, crystallization of marble floors, and floor stripping and buffing.

A different level of customer service

Bravo says that in the first month that MerryMaids has operated, there has been absolutely no case of an irate homeowner demanding re-cleaning. "I believe two things work for us. First is the fact that we put MerryMaids employees through the grind. Training, conducted by Facilities Management Academy (FMA), is done with mock-ups of various parts of the house. MerryMaids training videos enable the trainees to review the cleaning processes. The training curriculum also includes caring for the body through proper movements and posture, including basic first aid. Finally, the trainees must successfully clean one each of small, medium and large homes before they can be issued a Certificate of Competency by the FMA. The second important thing is to make the Filipino culture work for us. And that is, we, Filipinos like personalized relationships."

The future

Bravo admits that the long-term success of MerryMaids lies in an improved awareness among home owners as to what constitutes clean homes. The "looks clean" home may hide a lot of dirt and dust. Bravo, who also trains the janitors employed by ServiceMaster points out that hiring office janitors to clean homes may not be as effective as hiring a trained home cleaner because the focus of a janitor's training is very different from that of a home cleaner. An office building is simply not a home. "From the way things look, we are certainly going in the right direction," Bravo concludes.

merry maids

CALL 813-3013 for MM service.

Vilma Bravo, who trained at MerryMaids, USA for almost a month on the cleaning processes and operations of MM says, "Home cleaning is all about thorough cleaning at the shortest time, all the time. When MerryMaids leaves a home, the owner can be sure that her home is clean, looks clean and smells clean."

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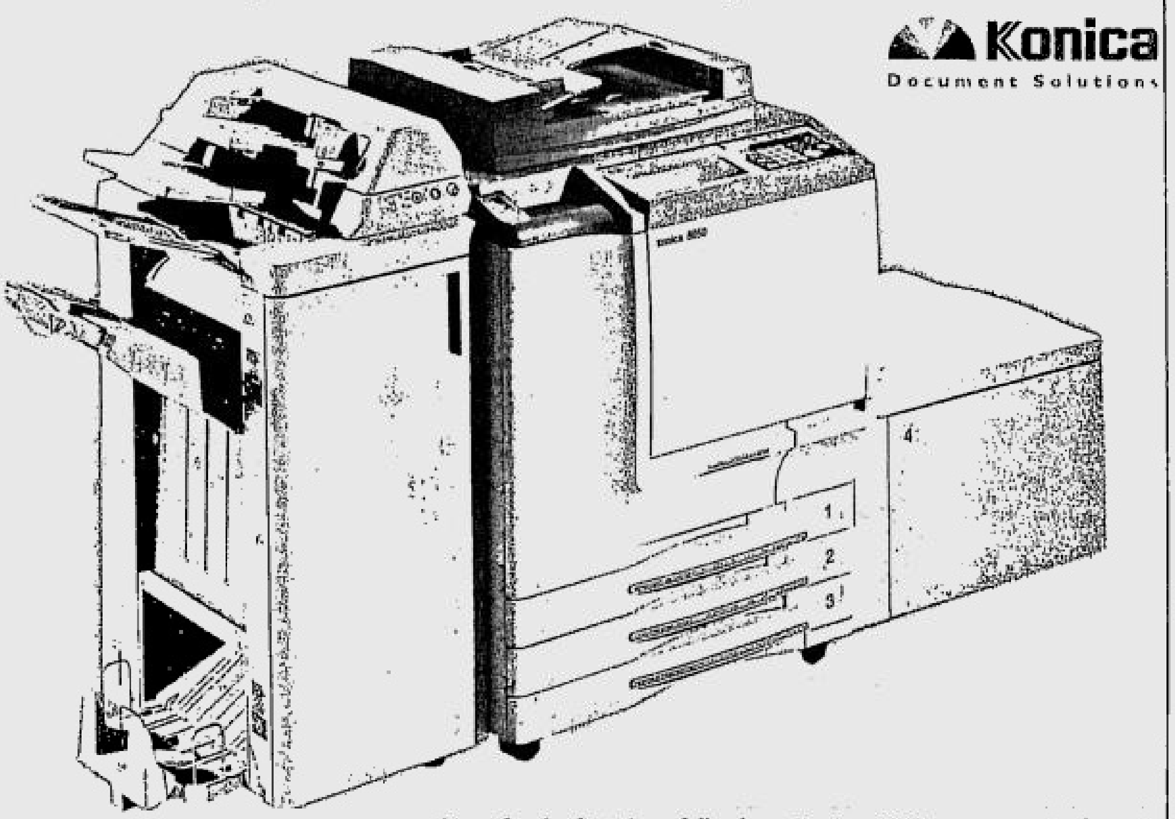

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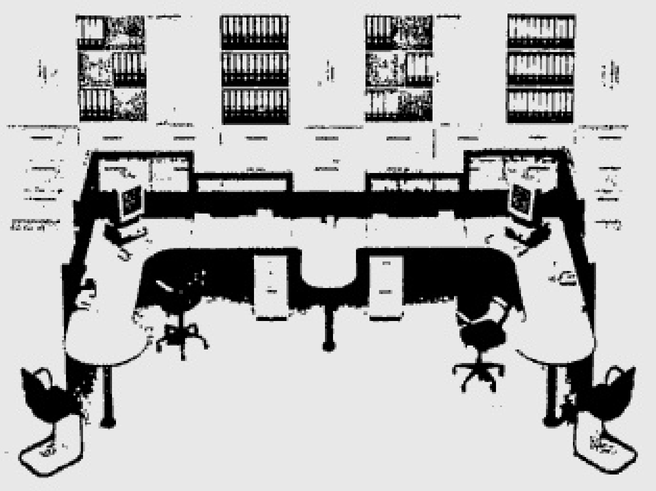

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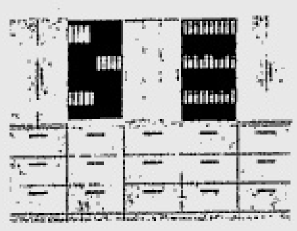

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Tokyo, Japan

The Facilities Management Academy supports U-bix and its subsidiaries by training entry level workers on skills and work habits required from service personnel such as the service partners for FMI, copier key operators, and copier technicians. All its courses are accredited by Tesda. FMA also ventured into the training of health care givers ad childcare.

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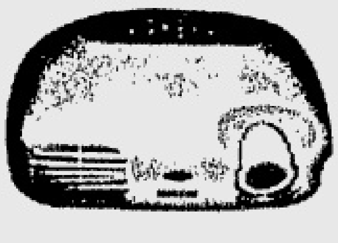
UBIX Products

Konica Digital Multi-function Copiers

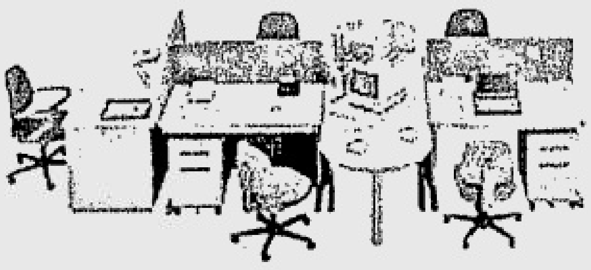
AT THE DAWN of the digital age, offices depend entirely on the ability to get information into the right hands fast. With direct networking capability, Konica digital multi-function machines answer this need through a synergy of online printing, scanning, copying, faxing, and document finishing to create a seamless flow of information throughout the office and beyond. It brings applications within reach for customers who have previously relied on single function devices, very expensive scanning devices, or outsourcing to input into a document management application. In an age of swift and dramatic change, Konica remains constant in its willingness to push forward and explore the farthest reaches of technology.



Epson Printers, Scanners, Multi-Media Projectors

EPSON is one of the biggest manufacturers of printers in the world. It is the market leader in the dot matrix printer category, to which U-BIX is the exclusive distributor for the FX-1170 and FX-2180 series. Its product lineup has expanded to include inkjet, photo and laser printers, scanners and multi-media projectors. U-BIX is currently the top reseller of multi-media projectors in the industry.

Okamura Office Furniture



OKAMURA is one of the top 3 office furniture companies in Japan. Okamura is continually striving to build on its success as a solution company that creates comfortable spaces. Specifically focusing its efforts on supporting the new office styles that have accompanied the advancement of information technology in the workplace.

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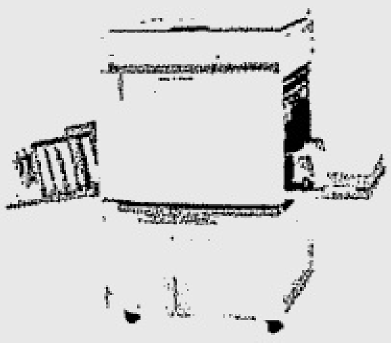

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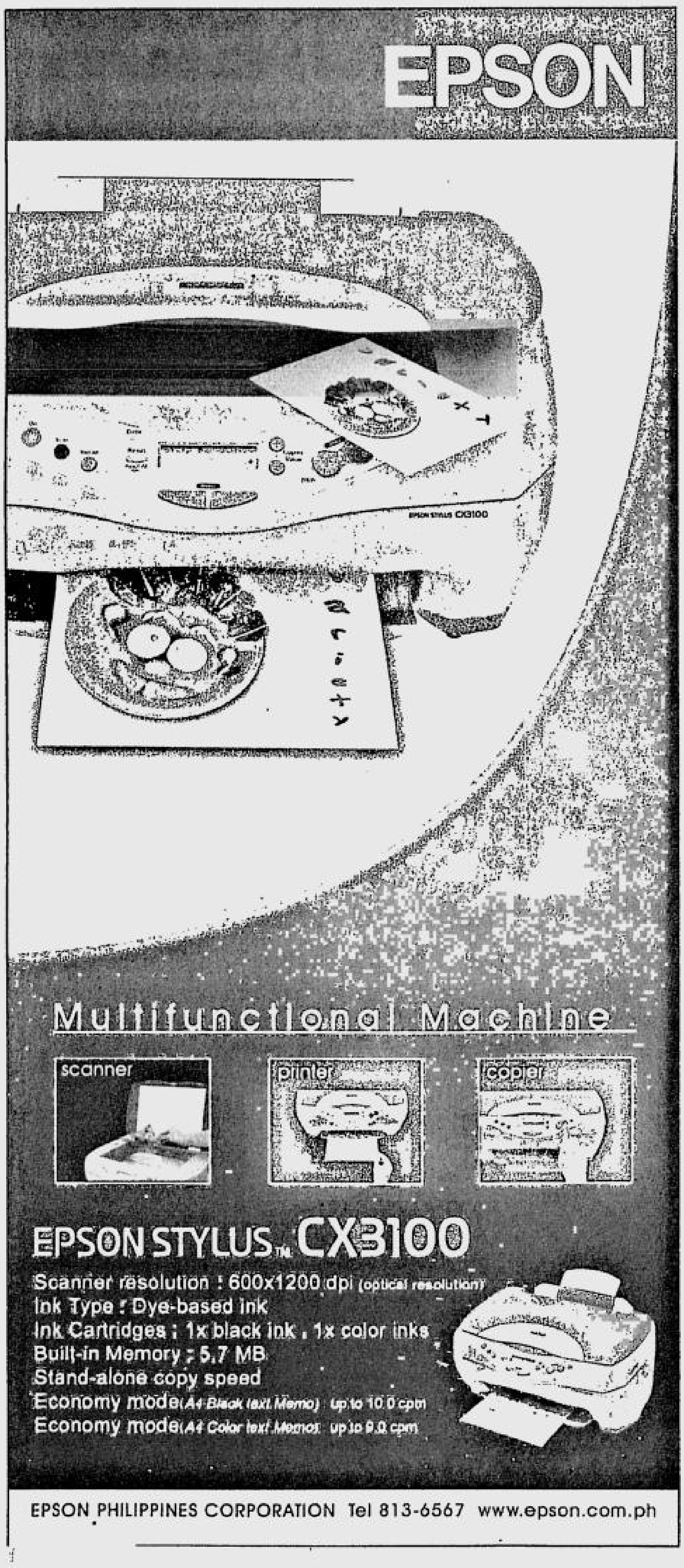

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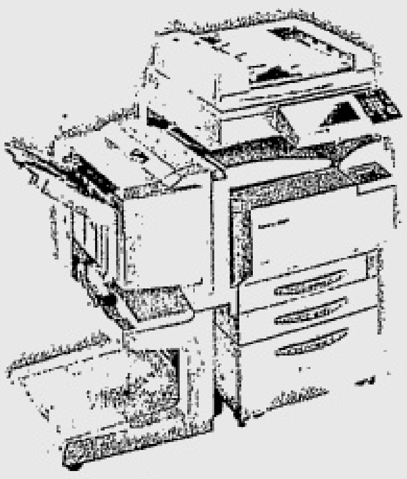

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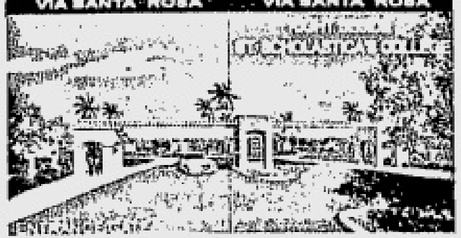

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QUEZON CITY

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CONDO/TWNHSE

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YEARLY/MONTHLY/MAKATI Clland8 1/2/3BR/Furn P12-20T/mo Leg.Vill./1BR/8922642/8190795

MANILA

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PASIG

ORTIGAS CTR 2BR 115m² 1mds rm w/carpark 412-1825

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

CONDO/TWNHSE

QUEZON CITY

Garden Island New Mla 2br 15t/mo 7001393/09163009946

STUDIO UNIT Infront of Ateneo & Miriam College Call Nona 0919-5955673

VARIED AREAS

TOWNHOUSE 3-4 BR near Baclaran / Makati T-8184238 / 8127741

APARTMENT

MAKATI

Unfurn 3BR3TB 1Md 8903104

MANILA

Nr UST 2BR 1OT 373-0587

QUEZON CITY

CUBAO 8th Av 3br2tb 9114510

CUBAO P3.8 Ladys 9124428

FOR LEASE

ROCKWELL 2BDR 2Pkng MIYA 09209218726 / 8864168

ROOM & BOARD

2 Ldys no dep 4T 4154327

MLA P120 7118679, 4113301 NR UST DAILY WKLY 3HRS

PQUE P200/12HR 8275345

BUSINESS RENTAL

AYALA AVE 8181696/7586

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

C-5 Libis from P15T/mo. 0917-8913080

ORTIGAS CENTER 40 110 130 150m² 412-1825

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

1998 Nissan Sentra GTS Red Automatic P280,000 T.8974798 ; 09189422422

HONDA

Honda Civic '96 634-9500

MITSUBISHI

Rush Sale Adventure 2003 Glassports Diesel 1st Own Contact Bing 995-7834

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FOR SALE! VOLVO 570 '99 Model, Owner driven, Very good condition! P800T Nego. Call 8504974 Marylin

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Third Elementary Education Project
Division of Romblon
Division Bids and Awards Committee

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

(IFB No. RBN-SBP-05-03)

February 11, 2004

To All Qualified Bidders:

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) towards the cost of financing the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments for civil works component of the project. Bidding is open to all eligible bidders classified by and registered with Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) on registration and classification of at least Small "B" for building from eligible source countries defined in the guidelines for procurement under the JBIC Loans.
2. The Division Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the following packages:
   - Package 5: RBN-03-003-0060
     Municipality of Magdiwang:
     Repair of Three (3) Classrooms School Building at Ambulong PS and Repair of Six (6) Classrooms School Building at Tampayan ES
   - Package 9: RBN-05-003-0063
     Municipality of Corcuera:
     Repair of Six (6) Classrooms School Building at Corcuera CS and Repair of Two (2) Classrooms School Building at Tacasan ES.
   - Package 10: RBN-05-004-0064
     Municipality of Corcuera:
     Repair of Three (3) Classrooms School Building at Gobon ES and Repair of Six (6) Classrooms School Building at Alegria ES
   - Package 11: RBN-12/03-007/004-0065
     Municipality of San Fernando:
     Repair of Three (3) Classrooms School Building at Teresa Bernas ES and Municipality of Cajidiocan
     Repair of Three (3) Classrooms School Building at Cambalo ES
   - Package 12: RBN-13-007-0066
     Municipality of San Jose:
     Repair of Nine (9) Classrooms School Building at San Jose CS
3. Bidding documents may be purchased at Dep.Ed. Division Office of Romblon, Division Project Implementation Support Unit (DPISU) for Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) with address at Bgy. Capaclan, Romblon, Romblon for a non-refundable fee of **Php1,500.00** for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. A pre-bid Conference will be held on **February 27, 2004** at exactly **10:00 A.M.** at the Dep.Ed. Division Office of Romblon with address at Brgy. Capaclan, Romblon, Romblon.
5. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security in the amount of 2.5% of total bid price with a validity of 118 calendar days, and shall be delivered to the Division's Bids and Awards Committee, Department of Education – Division Office of Romblon, Bgy: Capaclan, Romblon, Romblon on or before **10:00 A.M., March 12, 2004**, at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

(Sgd.) JOSE FREDDIE M. MOCON
Assistant School Division Superintendent
Chairperson
Division Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – February 11, 2004)

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8990215

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% CAR LOAN 6567685

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0357

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

CAR BUSNES OFW 524-3197

1.5% 1HR CAR LOAN3743803

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

AUDIO/ VIDEO

Aowa Home&Ent Sys Cmplete Bnew 0917-8214936

BILLIARDS

23T New Compt SR impld 7767507

BUY/SELL

EDUC PLAN 0918-3972820

EDUCATION PLANS 7800106

FURNITURE/ FIXTURES

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WANTED TO BUY

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EXECUTIVE HILLS SUBDIV.
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Chandeliers, Ethan Allen furniture, cabinets, tables, bric-a-bracs, paintings, beds, bookshelves, lamp shades, chinawares. Even house fixtures like solid wooddoors, window frames.
EVERYTHING in the house and the house itself!!!

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Tel. 823-1710

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INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate

❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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LEONARDO CABIGAO STO. DOMINGO, SR.

has joined our Creator on February 9, 2004 at the age of 65.

His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels along Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Cremation will be on February 14, 2004, 8:00 a.m. at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels Crematorium.

The family requests for your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

TEODORO E. ENRIQUEZ

died in the Grace of our Lord on February 7, 2004 at the age of 85.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Funeral Homes Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be tomorrow at 2:00 p.m. at Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Q.C.

So Sadly Missed,
So Lovingly Remembered.

On his 1st Death Anniversary, We Remember Our Dearly Beloved

RTC Judge EMILIO BANUSING LEGASPI

of San Jose, Antique

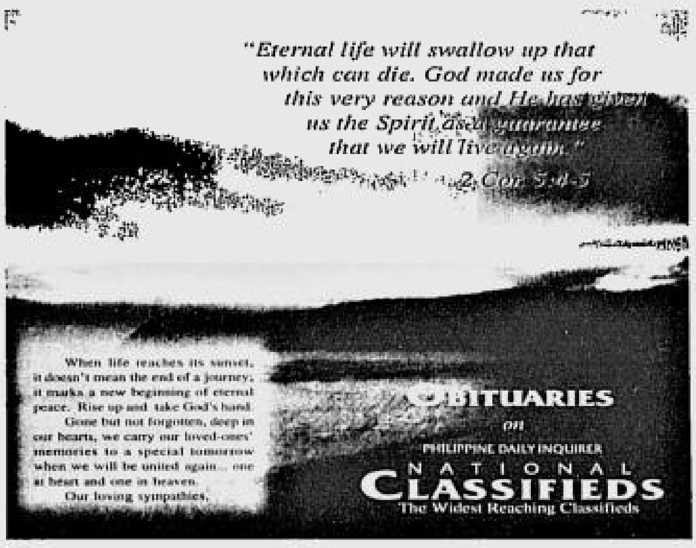
who died on February 12, 2003.

A Holy Mass will be offered in his honor on February 12, 2004 at 6:00 A.M. at the MENSA DOMINI Chapel, San Jose, Antique.

His wife and dearest friend, **Dr. Clydie Rondario Yabut-Legaspi**, his children and grandchildren
- **Emilio Felipe II (Boysie)**, **Joy Imperial-Legaspi** and **Noynoy**;
- **Ma. Filipinas (Girlie)**;
- **Atty. Emilio Rodolfo III (Boyet)**, **Ma. Eleanor Banatin-Legaspi** and **Isabela Victoria**;
- **Atty. Emilio IV (Juny Boy)**;
- **Dr. Faith Marie (Marie)**

all brothers and sisters, in-laws, nephews and nieces, would like to extend their sincerest thanks to all those who shared in their deepest sorrows, and who continue to keep Judge Legaspi in their hearts and prayers.

> **"For God so loved the world, that He gave us His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Everlasting life."**
>
> — John 3:16



"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."
2 Cor. 5:4-5

When life reaches its sunset, it doesn't mean the end of a journey; it marks a new beginning of eternal peace. Rise up and take God's hand. Gone but not forgotten, deep in our hearts, we carry our loved-ones' memories to a special tomorrow when we will be united again... one at heart and one in heaven.
Our loving sympathies.

OBITUARIES on PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS
The Widest Reaching Classifieds

CLASSIFIEDS

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE JUNK ITEMS

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING: February 26, and 27, 2004, 2:00 p.m.
The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding of the following junk and unserviceable items:

SCHEDULE - I: February 26, 2004, 2:00 PM, MMD Bidding Room, Bldg-1, NPC-HO, Diliman, QC

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
1.	One (1) lot scrap metals consisting of aluminum claddings, radiators corroded drums and GI sheets, pipes motors, post and suspension insulators steel beams, fire extinguishers steel plates, copper wires, and other junk items located at the barricaded area of the Waste Segregation Area, Plant B, Mak-Ban GPP Bo. Bitin, Bay, Laguna	P 1,645,000.00/lot
2.	One (1) lot of assorted cables consisting of co-axial, telephone, power and control cables located at Bataan TPP, Limay, Bataan.	P 1,040,550.00/lot
3.	One (1) lot scrap metals consisting of deformed and corroded rebars, wire rope cuttings, unserviceable steel towers and obsolete steel towers located at Kalayaan Warehouse	P 215,600.00/lot
*4.	One (1) lot expired AERO Foam, approximately 88 pails and 11 drums of waste/sludge oil located at Navotas Tank Farm, Navotas Fish Port, Navotas, Metro Manila	P 7,436.00/lot

* DENR permit is required for participating bidders

SCHEDULE - II: February 27, 2004, 2:00 PM, MMD Bidding Rm., Bldg.-1, NPC-HO, Diliman, QC

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION and LOCATION	MIN. BID PRICE
1.	One (1) unit junk, FMC Crane, 50-tonner located at BTPP, Limay Bataan	P 660,000.00
2.	Barite, approximately 4,114 bags, 100 lbs/bag located at Mak-Ban GPP, Bo. Bitin, Bay-Laguna	P 326.00/bag
3.	One (1) lot splatter board made of plastics, approximately 10,000 kgs located at Mak-Ban GPP, Bo. Bitin, Bay, Laguna	P 2.00/kg.
*4.	One (1) unit unserviceable, retired and cannibalized electric generating set "CKD" Brand, 448 KW rating, Unit No. 5 of Bantayan DPP, Bantayan, Cebu	P 472,000.00

* Bidding will be simultaneous with SPUG Cebu Office.

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. **PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE**
2. **LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN OF THE BIDDER OR AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COMPANY (2002 ORIGINAL OR CERTIFIED TRUE COPY OF BIR).**

All interested parties who wish to secure bid forms for the said bidding must present a valid Tax Identification Card or Income Tax Return.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/set from S.V. Lomuntad Jr. at Bldg. 1, Ground Floor, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone no. 924-5384. For Visayas bidders, Schedule II, Item no. 4; One (1) unit unserviceable Genset "CKD", the bidding shall be conducted simultaneously at NPC SPUG Office, 4th Floor BF Bldg., Escano Street, Cebu City and the NPC Head Office. Visayas bidders may secure bid form for P500.00 for the said schedule from Mr. Edmundo A. Veloso, Jr., Department Manager, SPUG Visayas or call telephone no. 256-3694. **Deadline for issuance of bid form is 4:30 p.m. February 25, 2004 for Schedule-I, February 26 for Schedule-II.**

For the Materials Management Department

(Sgd.) **FELIX B. TACATA, JR.**
OIC, MMD

(PDI - Feb. 9, 10 & 11, 2004)

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FEBRUARY 6, 2004

ANNOUNCEMENT

TO ALL RICE BASED FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS (FOS) INTERESTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RICE IMPORTATION PRORAM FOR 2004:

UPON APPROVAL OF THE NFA COUNCIL, BE INFORMED THAT AMENDMENTS TO MEMO CIRCULAR AO-2K3-12-002 DATED JANUARY 13, 2004 UNDER B (1) PROVISION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. OUT OF THE 310,000 MT ALLOWABLE RICE IMPORT VOLUME, 100,000 MT IS ALLOWED TO ARRIVE FROM DATE OF PUBLICATION BUT NOT LATER THAN JULY 31, 2004 AT THE DESIGNATED DISCHARGE PHILIPPINE PORTS. THIS SHALL BE ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS WHICH SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE PAYMENT OF FULL TARIFF/DUTIES. LIKEWISE, A LETTER OF INTENT TO BRING IN NOT LATER THAN APRIL 30, 2004 THE IMPORTED VOLUME SHALL BE SUBMITTED TO THE LAND BANK BY THE INTERESTED FOS.

B. THE REMAINING 210,000 MT HOWEVER, SHOULD ARRIVE NOT EARLIER THAN MAY 1, 2004 AND NOT LATER THAN JULY 31, 2004.

PENALTY PROVISIONS HOWEVER, REMAIN THE SAME FOR VIOLATIONS ON EARLY AND LATE ARRIVALS AS THE CASE MAYBE.

FOR STRICT COMPLIANCE.

ATTY. ARTHUR C. YAP
Administrator

(PDI – February 11, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Municipality of Taytay
Palawan
OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MAYOR

NOTICE TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The MUNICIPALITY OF TAYTAY, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN invites prospective bidders to pre-qualify and to bid for the "EXCLUSIVE PRIVILEGE TO GATHER OR COLLECT EDIBLE BIRD'S NEST WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THIS MUNICIPALITY."

Minimum Bid Price = P2,500,000.00

Interested bidders may obtain information from the Office of the Municipal Treasurer, Taytay, Palawan from February 17 to 23, 2004 and secure bid documents upon payment of non-refundable fee of Two Hundred Fifty Pesos (P 250.00).

Pre-qualification of bidder conference will be on February 24, 2004 at the Office of the Municipal Mayor.

Dropping/Opening of Bids in the presence of the bidders will be on February 26, 2004 at 2:00 PM at the Session Hall of Sangguniang Bayan, Taytay, Palawan.

The MPBAC reserves the right to reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s) and to accept such bid most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ROBERTO V. RODRIGUEZ**
MPBAC - Chairman

(PDI--Feb. 2, 11 & 13, 2004)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Quezon City

6 February 2004

ANNOUNCEMENT

TO ALL RICE BASED FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS (FOS) INTERESTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RICE IMPORTATION PROGRAM FOR 2004:

BE INFORMED THAT A TOTAL VOLUME OF 310,000 METRIC TONS IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR REGIONAL ALLOCATION.

THE REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF ALLOCATION WHICH IS BASED ON THE PERCENT OF RICE LAND HARVESTED IN A REGION OVER THE NATIONAL HECTARAGE IS AS FOLLOWS:

REGION	ALLOCATION IN METRIC TON
Philippines	310,000
NCR	1,457
Ilocos Region	28,892
Cagayan Valley	40,362
Central Luzon	43,369
Southern Tagalog	27,714
Bicol Region	21,111
Western Visayas	44,857
Central Visayas	6,727
Eastern Visayas	17,577
Western Mindanao	13,020
Northern Mindanao	14,694
Southern Mindanao	19,158
Central Mindanao	17,701
A R M M	13,361

FIFTY PERCENT (50%) OF THE REGIONAL ALLOCATION SHALL BE DIVIDED EQUALLY AMONG QUALIFIED FOS IN THE REGIONS. UNDER THIS SCHEME, QUALIFIED FOS MUST SECURE NFA LICENSE AS IMPORTER ON OR BEFORE 27 FEBRUARY 2004 TO BE GIVEN ALLOCATION.

THE REMAINING 50% OF THE REGIONAL ALLOCATION SHALL BE OPENED ON A FIRST-COM-FIRST-SERVED BASIS TO QUALIFIED FOS WITHIN THE REGION SUBJECT TO PROVISIONS OF MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR AO-2K3-12-003 DATED JANUARY 13, 2004.

FOS SHALL HAVE UNTIL APRIL 30, 2004 TO OPEN/AVAIL LETTERS OF CREDIT AND/OR OTHER FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS. OTHERWISE, THEIR ALLOCATION SHALL BE FORFEITED, POOLED AND BE OPEN/MADE AVAILABLE ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST SERVED BASIS THROUGH A NATIONAL POOL/ALLOCATION TO FOS NATIONWIDE.

THE TOTAL MAXIMUM VOLUME OF 1,500 MT WILL CONTINUE TO BE APPLICABLE FOS WHO HAVE ALREADY AVAILED THE MAXIMUM VOLUME ARE NO LONGER ENTITLED TO IMPORT FOR THE CURRENT YEAR.

FOR STRICT COMPLIANCE.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ARTHUR C. YAP**
Administrator

(PDI--Feb. 11, 2004)

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BCDA

BASES CONVERSION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS

ASSET DISPOSITION PROGRAM – PHASE 2

The Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) is inviting interested proponents to participate in Phase 2 of BCDA's Asset Disposition Program (ADP Phase 2). ADP Phase 2 involves the development and privatization of the following properties:

1. Approximately 7,659-square meter LogCom, Firing Range located along C-5 Road, Taguig, Metro Manila; and
2. Approximately 5,025-square meter Nichols Loop (Lot 10) located along South Superhighway, Villamor Air Base (VAB), Pasay City.

Interested proponents may submit their Letters of Interest to BCDA and can purchase the Terms of Reference (TOR) for ADP Phase 2 that outlines, among others, the requirements that will enable proponents to participate in the privatization.

The TOR for ADP Phase 2 will be ready for distribution to interested proponents starting on 13 February 2004 at the BCDA offices. A non-refundable cost of the TOR is Php10,000.00, for each TOR, payable to the BCDA in Cash or Manager's Check.

A conference among interested proponents is tentatively set on 20 February 2004. The objective of the conference is to discuss the property that forms part of ADP Phase 2, the TOR and other clarifications from interested proponents. Interested proponents will be informed of the final schedule and venue of the conference through contact numbers submitted to the BCDA.

Interested proponents can direct their inquiries to:

THE CHAIRMAN
ADP PHASE 2 COMMITTEE (ADPCom-2)
BCDA Corporate Centre
Gozar cor. Lucas Street, Villamor Air Base
Pasay City

or they can contact Ms. Aileen R. Zosa or Ms. Bambie L. Andal at telephone numbers 510-0420 or 510-0411.

RUFO COLAYCO
President and Chief Executive Officer

(PDI – Feb. 11, 16 & 18, 2004)

MIP seminar

MARKETING Institute of the Philippines, the education and training arm of the Philippine Marketing Association, Inc. invites you to a seminar on "Building Blocks of Marketing A-Z, scheduled on February 17, 18 & 20, 2004 (Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday), 1:00-6:00 p.m. at the AIM Conference Center, Benavidez cor. Trasierra Sts., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

This seminar is specifically designed for those who may already be doing a marketing management function but whose academic preparation is not marketing. They can be front-line, mid-and upper-level managers in brand management, sales, customer relations, advertising, promotions, media and public relations.

For inquiries, please call the PMA Secretariat c/o Ms. Lydia Marinas at tels. 634-5722; 634-4890 or Fax: 636-1451 and E-mail: pma@philonline.com or lydiamm@edsamail.com.ph

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Philippine Daily Inquirer
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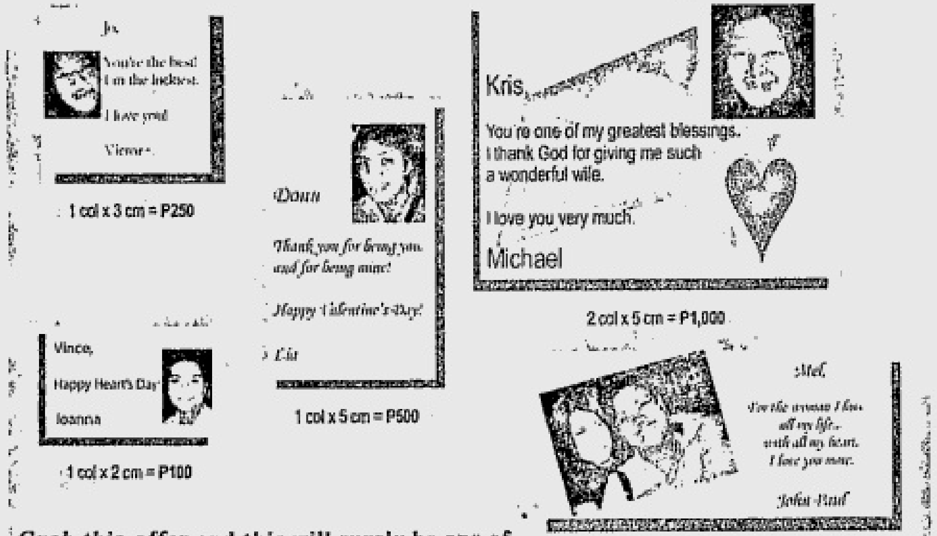

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912-9011
e-mail: [illegible]

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635-0220
e-mail: [illegible]

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☎ 899-4427 (Direct)
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TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
AD NO. MMD-TRANSCO 2004-008

PD Ref. No., PB0400203-EL0023
PR No.: GSD-03-005527

1. The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (TRANSCO - BAC) - HEAD OFFICE, invites local bidders contractors to apply for eligibility who are
   a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorship, or
   b. Partnerships duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines, or
   c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines, or
   d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract. Provided, however, That Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%), or
   e. Cooperative duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA)
2. Procurement of
   SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF SIX (6) UNITS FOUR (4) DOOR CAR SEDAN 1.6 Liters, Automatic Transmission 2004 Model
3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall be specified in the attached Technical Quotation Form of the Bid Documents
   The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid is P4,800,000.00 to be sourced from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo
4. The Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting February 5, 2004 to March 1, 2004 at The BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division (MMD) Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg. Power Center Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) per set.
5. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on February 19, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. at the Admin Conference Room G/F TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
6. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before 10:00 a.m. of March 02, 2004 at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date falls on a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184
8. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) ANTONIO G. LABAYANI
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Feb. 5 & 11, 2004)

Marketing professors holds informative talk

ON FEB. 13 Michael Brophy, will be conducting an informative talk on the University of Western Australia – Manila MBA Program. The orientation will walk participants through the thrusts of the MBA in the areas of leadership, strategy, and entrepreneurship. The event, which is free of charge, will be held from 11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at Room C, 26/F IIAP, Ayala Life – FGU Center, 6811 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

The University of Western Australia in conjunction with The Esteban International School offers this unique classroom based MBA program in which 9 out of 12 professors are flown in to facilitate classes in Manila. It is an 18-month non-thesis program and is held conveniently in Makati. The UWA is a Sandstone University (Australia's equivalent to an ivy league school) ranked one of the top Universities in the country. Its Graduate School of Management is ranked among the top 3 Business schools in Australia

Brophy, holds a first Class Honors Degree in Commerce. He has taught Marketing Principles in the UWA's Perth, Singapore, Jakarta and Shanghai programs including lecturing in Consumer Behavior and Marketing Management at Curtin University; Marketing Strategy at the Curtin Graduate School; and Marketing Analysis for the ECU Graduate Program. He has held General Manager and Managing Director positions in a variety of industries including mining, heavy construction, commercial fishing, and hospitality. He has consulted strategic marketing and market research to a wide range of organizations that include manufacturing, professional services, government, and the arts. His current activities include the marketing of his own inventions, the establishment of a vineyard on his farm and on going marketing consulting to an Australian Football League Team.

For reservations to the UWA Orientation call the Esteban International School at 844-2812/ 887-6390; fax 887-6391; and e-mail address: esteban@i-next.net. You may also visit the University's website at www.gsm.uwa.edu.au.

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7 CHASING LIBERTY
8 LAST SAMURAI

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 LAST SAMURAI
2 STUCK ON YOU
3 BROTHER BEAR
4 MONA LISA SMILE
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
6 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
7 MILAN
8 TWINS EFFECT

SM CITY BACOOR
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1 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 MILAN
5 MAGIC KITCHEN
6 MILAN
7 CHASING LIBERTY
8 WISHING STAIRS

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1 WRONG TURN
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8204075

1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MILAN
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

SM BICUTAN

1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MILAN
4 WISHING STAIRS

SM CITY BAGUIO
(074) 4424995

1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 THE GRUDGE
3 MILAN
4 STUCK ON YOU

SM STA. MESA
7149522 • 7160416

1 MILAN
2 LAST SAMURAI
3 CHASING LIBERTY
4 WISHING STAIRS
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
6 MAGIC KITCHEN
7 HAUNTED MANSION
8 SHIRI
9 MONA LISA SMILE
10 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE

SM SOUTHMALL
8068888

1 MAGIC KITCHEN
2 HAUNTED MANSION
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SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1 SHIRI
2 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
3 IN THE CUT
4 LAST SAMURAI
5 MAGIC KITCHEN
6 MILAN
7 CHASING LIBERTY
8 HAUNTED MANSION
9 MILAN
10 MONA LISA SMILE
11 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
12 WISHING STAIRS

SM CITY MARILAO

1 DIABLO
2 MILAN
3 STUCK ON YOU
4 HAUNTED MANSION

SM CITY ILOILO
3208422

1 MEMENTO MORI
2 RESERVED
3 LAST SAMURAI
4 BROTHER BEAR
5 STUCK ON YOU
6 MILAN
7 RESERVED
8 HAUNTED OFFICE

SM MEGAMALL
6331901

1 LAST SAMURAI
2 MONA LISA SMILE
3 MAGIC KITCHEN
4 CHASING LIBERTY
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 PELIKULA AT LIPUNAN
7 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
8 SHIRI
9 MILAN
10 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
11 WISHING STAIRS
12 ANIMATION FESTIVAL

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 MILAN
4 MAGIC KITCHEN

SM CITY MANILA
5239040

1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 MONA LISA SMILE
3 I AM DINA
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 LAST SAMURAI
7 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
8 SHIRI
9 MILAN
10 WISHING STAIRS
11 STUCK ON YOU
12 MAGIC KITCHEN

SM CITY DAVAO
2976999

1 MILAN
2 THE GATHERING
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 TWINS EFFECT
5 MONA LISA SMILE
6 STUCK ON YOU

SM CITY PAMPANGA

1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 STUCK ON YOU
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 IN THE CUT
5 MILAN
6 MILAN

SM CITY LUCENA

1 BROTHER BEAR
2 MILAN
3 THE GRUDGE
4 LAST SAMURAI

THE PODIUM CINEMA

1 HAUNTED MANSION
11:05 FS/11:25
MF/1:20/3:15/5:10/7:05/
9:00/10:30 LFS/11:00
LMF/12:30 END

2 CHASING LIBERTY
11:15 FS/11:45
MF/2:00/4:15/6:30/
8:45/10:45 LFS/11:00
LMF/1:00 END

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SM CINEMA

what to watch

Action

"Spectacular action and impassioned drama! Shiri piles one breathless sequence on top of another."
- Michael Wilmington, Chicago Tribune

A female North Korean sniper named Hee, has led agents Ryu (Han Suk-Gyu) and Lee (Song Kang-Ho) through a nightmare of burnt corpses and bloody crime scenes for ten years before suddenly vanishing. One year later she resurfaces, and with her comes a squad of North Korean commandos who have infiltrated Seoul and master-minded the theft of an experimental explosive.

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G1 GLORIETTA 1

1 MILAN
2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 MILAN
4 MONA LISA SMILE

G4 GLORIETTA 4

1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 HAUNTED MANSION
THX GUARANTEED SEATS 3 CHASING LIBERTY 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5 MAGIC KITCHEN
6 MILAN
7 WISHING STAIRS

GB1 GREENBELT 1

ArtFilm
1 SPANISH LOVE FILMFEST
2 MILAN 11:30 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30

REPERTORY'S FAME
Feb 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, Mar 6 & 7

GB3 GREENBELT 3

THX GUARANTEED SEATS 1 CHASING LIBERTY 1:20 3:50 6:20 8:50 11:20
THX GUARANTEED SEATS 2 MILAN 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30 11:00
GUARANTEED SEATS 3 I AM DINA 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30 11:00
GUARANTEED SEATS 4 THE LAST SAMURAI 1:30 4:30 7:30 10:30
GUARANTEED SEATS 5 HAUNTED MANSION

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER

THX 1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 MILAN
3 MILAN
4 HAUNTED MANSION
5 MONAL LISA SMILE

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1 (DDS) MAGIC KITCHEN
2 (SDDS) TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
3 (DTS) LAST SAMURAI
4 GOLD (DTS) CHASING LIBERTY
5 GOLD (DOLBY) MONA LISA SMILE
6 GOLD (SDDS) HAUNTED MANSION
7 GOLD (DOLBY) MILAN
8 [illegible] MILAN
9 [illegible] BROTHER BEAR
10 [illegible] WISHING STAIRS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY) MILAN
2 (DOLBY) CHASING LIBERTY
3 (DOLBY) HAUNTED MANSION
4 (DOLBY) MONALISA SMILE

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 833.3274

1 MILAN
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MAGIC KITCHEN

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1 MILAN
2 MAGIC KITCHEN
3 CHASING LIBERTY
HAUNTED MANSION
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) WISHING STAIRS
5

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1 WISHING STAIRS
2 GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
3 MAGIC KITCHEN
4 MILAN
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 CHASING LIBERTY

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel 873.5004

1 MILAN
2 HAUNTED MANSION

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 892.2503

CHASING LIBERTY

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 LAST SAMURAI
2 KILL BILL

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1 MILAN
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MOUNSTER SHARK
4

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

RESERVE
5
6
7 (DTS)
8 (SDDS)
9 (DOLBY)

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1 MAGIC KITCHEN
2 MILAN
3 MILAN
4 (SDDS) CHASING LIBERTY
5 IN THE CUT
6 (DOLBY) HAUNTED MANSION
7 (DTS) WISHING STAIRS
8 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
9 TWIN EFFECTS

Gotesco Commonwealth
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1 RESERVE
2 (SDDS)
3 (DTS)
4 (DOLBY)
5

Gotesco Ortigas
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1 WISHING STAIRS
2 MILAN
3 (DTS) CHASING LIBERTY
4 LIBERATED
5 HAUNTED MANSION

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1 MILAN
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 CHASING LIBERTY
4 MAGIC KITCHEN

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1 (DOLBY) HAUNTED MANSION
2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 MAGIC KITCHEN
4 MILAN
5 WISHING STAIRS

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 MILAN
2 DIABLO

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta Center
ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7
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1 MILAN
2 WISHING STAIRS
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) HAUNTED MANSION
4 (SDDS) CHASING LIBERTY
5 (DTS) LAST SAMURAI
6 MAGIC KITCHEN
7 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) HAUNTED MANSION
2 MILAN
3 (DTS ES) STUCK ON YOU
4 DIABLO

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1 THE GATHERING
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY) HAUNTED MANSION
4 (DTS) THE GATHERING

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1 STUCK ON YOU
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY) TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4 MAID IN MANHATTAN

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 MILAN
3 (DTS) HAUNTED MANSION

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 MILAN
2 (DTS) MILAN
3 (DOLBY) HAUNTED MANSION
4 CHASING LIBERTY

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 MILAN
2 (DOLBY) HAUNTED MANSION
3 (DTS) CHASING LIBERTY
4 MILAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 TWINS EFFECTS
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY) LAST SAMURAI

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 MILAN
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY) DIABLO
4 (DTS) LAST SAMURAI

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320

1 STUCK ON YOU
2 MILAN
3 MILAN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) PURI
2 DIABLO
3 HAUNTED MANSION
4 (DTS) MILAN

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) HAUNTED MANSION
2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 (DTS) MILAN
4 IN THE CUT
5 BIBINGKA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 MILAN

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 MILAN
3 CHAISING LIBERTY

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 BROTHER BEAR
2 TEH GRUDGE
3 (DTS) LAST SAMURAI
4 (DOLBY) MILAN

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520.8914

1 (DTS) RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 STUCK ON YOU
2 DIABLO
3 LAST SAMURAI
4 MILAN

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 PURI
2 MILAN

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Araneta Center ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	SKY OF LOVE
Ali 2	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
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Ali 4	IN THE CUT
Ali 5	LAST SAMURAI
Ali 6	KILL BILL
Ali 7	THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

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FEB 15	OGIE & REGINE CONCERT
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FEB 18	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
FEB 22	PBA FIESTA CUP OPENING

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ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	POSSESSION / HUBOG
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	MILAN
B	
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KILL BILL
CINEMA-2	PURI
CINEMA-3	MALIKMATA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LAST SAMURAI
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	CAPTAIN BARBELL
CINEMA-6	MALIKMATA
CINEMA-7	MEMENTO MORI
CINEMA-8	TWINS EFFECT
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LAST SAMURAI
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BROTHER BEAR
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	STUCK ON YOU
CINEMA-12	LOTR 3 RETURN OF THE KING
CINEMA-14	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
CINEMA-15	DIABLO

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 3
CINEMA-1	KILL BILL
CINEMA-2	BANGKOK HAUNTED
CINEMA-4	CABIN FEVER

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

2ND WEEK

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A serial killer who cannot be caught.
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feb11 2004 | 7:30pm
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CUSACK HACKMAN HOFFMAN WEISZ
RUNAWAY JURY

THEATRE MALL GREENHILLS

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1	HAUNTED MANSION 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00 GP
CINEMA 2	CHASING LIBERTY 11:05, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50 P13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

For inquiries, call:
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RESERVED SEATING

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	MILAN 11:05, 1:45, 4:25, 7:05, 9:45 PG-13
2	CHASING LIBERTY 11:20, 2:05, 4:50 7:35, 10:20 PG-13
3	HAUNTED MANSION 11:30, 1:30, 3:30 5:30, 7:30, 9:30 GP
4	MONA LISA SMILE 11:40, 2:30, 5:20 8:10, 10:50 PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

MAGIC KITCHEN GP	MILAN PG13 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00	HAUNTED MANSION GP 11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40
MONA LISA SMILE PG13 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	WISHING STAIRS	CHASING LIBERTY PG13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

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CINEMA 1 THX — HAUNTED MANSION

2 MILAN DOLBY DIGITAL	3 HAUNTED MANSION DTS	4 MAGIC KITCHEN DOLBY DIGITAL
5 CHASING LIBERTY DOLBY DIGITAL	6 WISHING STAIRS SDDS	7 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE DOLBY
8 THE LAST SAMURAI DOLBY	9 MONA LISA SMILE DOLBY	10 GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE DOLBY

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P100 THX cinema / P75 for one level cinemas

ERMITA

526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12

1 MILAN DOLBY DIGITAL EX

2 MONA LISA SMILE DOLBY	3 GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE DOLBY	4 WISHING STAIRS DOLBY
5 MAGIC KITCHEN DOLBY	6 HAUNTED MANSION SDDS	7 CHASING LIBERTY DTS

Big R Supercenter METRO EAST

682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1 MONA LISA SMILE DOLBY	2 HAUNTED MANSION SDDS	
3 MILAN DOLBY	4 CHASING LIBERTY DOLBY DIGITAL	5 MAGIC KITCHEN DOLBY DIGITAL
6 WISHING STAIRS DOLBY	7 MILAN DTS	8 GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE DOLBY

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW

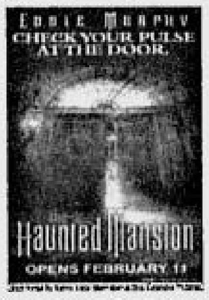
935-3229 / 31

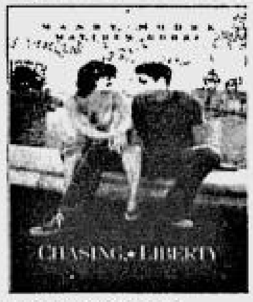
1 HAUNTED MANSION DOLBY DIGITAL	2 CHASING LIBERTY DOLBY	
3 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE DOLBY	4 MONA LISA SMILE DOLBY	5 MILAN DOLBY
6 GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE DOLBY	7 WISHING STAIRS DOLBY	8 MAGIC KITCHEN DOLBY

Citisquare MALABON 288-0985/2575	big Supercenter CAINTA 240-4661	Big R Supercenter STA. ROSA Laguna (049)837-0907
1 MILAN	1 HAUNTED MANSION	1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 HAUNTED MANSION	2 MILAN	2 MILAN
3 CHASING LIBERTY	3 CHASING LIBERTY	3 CHASING LIBERTY
4 MAGIC KITCHEN	4 MAGIC KITCHEN	4 IN THE CUT
		5 MILAN

Big R Supercenter LIPA 757-3664 / 312-5870	Big R Supercenter DASMARIÑAS 852-2125	Big R Supercenter STARMILLS San Fernando Pampanga 875-1927 / 961-5270
1 THE LAST SAMURAI	1 MILAN	1 MILAN
2 STUCK ON YOU	2 MONA LISA SMILE	2 MILAN
3 THE WISHER	3 MILAN	3 STUCK ON YOU
4 MILAN	4 HAUNTED MANSION	4 MONA LISA SMILE
5 DIABLO	5 CHASING LIBERTY	5 IN THE CUT
		6 HAUNTED MANSION

IMUS 471-8188 / 875-5858	BACOLOD 441-0458/59	ILOILO 336-8070/78
1 HAUNTED MANSION	1 BROTHER BEAR	1 BROTHER BEAR
2 MAGIC KITCHEN	2 MILAN	2 MILAN
3 CHASING LIBERTY	3 STUCK ON YOU	3 HAUNTED OFFICE
4 DTS GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE	4 SKY OF LOVE	4 STUCK ON YOU
5 MILAN	5 THE TWINS EFFECT	5 MEMENTO MORI
6 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE	6 THE LAST SAMURAI	6 MILAN





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PEOPLE at WORK

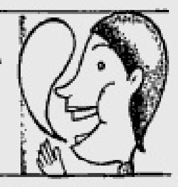
E-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Raul O. Marcelo**
Subsection Editor **Regina Galang Reyes**

Advertising veteran wants to get back in corporate race

CEO mentor Gozon

By Atty. Felipe L. Gozon
President and CEO, GMA Network Inc.



ASK YOUR CEO

I HAVE been reading your section with great interest. Perhaps you can help me in my present situation. I am 54 years old, recently retired from a senior management position at a well known, top ten multinational advertising company. In the last eight years, I was involved in managing the company's so-called second agency whose annual billings were P100 million. I have also worked on the client side of the business, having worked for 15 years as marketing communications manager of another multinational company, a market leader in its category. All in all, I have been in this business for 32 years, you can say a grizzled veteran, thoroughly experienced and familiar with the creative, business and operational aspects of advertising.

At this time in my life, I should be relaxing and taking it easy—which I am actually doing. However, my retirement money has been dwindling down and I find myself needing to work again. My problem is, despite my impressive credentials, there are no companies that are willing to take me in, presumably because of my "old age." A pity, really, because I know I have so much to share and contribute in terms of advertising/marketing know-how and wisdom. I have also tried applying for teaching jobs in several big universities but they all required me to have a master's, which I unfortunately don't have. If given a choice, however, I would much prefer a non-full-time advertising consultancy type of work—if there are any takers out there.

My financial needs are not that big, and I am willing to work for considerably less than what I used to receive. I am very physically fit, much healthier than many people younger than my age. What do you think? Where can I go from here? Thank you very for your help!

Niño de Dios

Perhaps your choice of Niño as the name to hide your true identity is a subconscious/conscious manifestation of your feeling that you are already too old at 54 years. I don't agree, even for employment or consultancy purposes.

I have seen many top executives, both in government and private sectors, who are employed even beyond their respective retirement ages. I suppose it all depends on how useful and needed one is or will be. Even if a particular company has a policy of not employing anyone beyond 50 years old, he can still be hired as a consultant for a definite period. We do this in GMA 7 and, I think, so do our competitors in the broadcast industry.

Because you "have so much to share and contribute in terms of advertising/marketing know-how and wisdom," I do not think you will have a problem in looking for employment or consultancy in the broadcast and advertising industries. There are many TV and radio companies in need of someone with your "impressive credentials" and qualifications. And I think so do the advertising agencies and other companies that need to market/sell their products and services.

It is not enough for TV and radio stations to produce high-rating programs; they must also market and sell their programs effectively. As you know there are so many TV and radio stations here that chase for limited and relatively smaller available advertising funds. The competition in the free broadcast industry and advertising industry here is very fierce.

In this environment, having people better than others is an edge that broadcast companies and advertising agencies are striving to have.

I therefore advise you to apply with broadcast companies and/or advertising agencies with which you feel you will be comfortable working and being associated.

Your writing to the People at Work section of the Philippine Daily INQUIRER is a good move. But interested employers will not be able to contact you except through the editor of this section. Let's hope that I'm correct and that you'll be receiving letters from interested parties through this broadsheet. With my best wishes.

(Our CEO columnists can answer requests for career advice through this column. Send your request by postal mail to the People at Work Editor, PDI Bldg., Chino Roces Ave., Makati City 1200 or e-mail peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.)

'Turnaround' CEO says 'slow, deliberate' climb to top makes for more discerning leader

By Cecile G. Garcia

IT may be safe to say that a unique ability to establish rapport with people has been the hallmark of Filemon T. Berba, Jr.'s distinctive career. Spanning more than three decades, it has been characterized as well by innovativeness and a talent for crisis management.

An acknowledged expert in project implementation, Berba, 66, retired as chairman and CEO of Integrated Microelectronics, Inc. (IMI) of the Ayala Group last year, though he continues to sit in the board. Referring to himself as a "technical person," he discloses, "I have been involved in setting up new companies and in taking charge of distressed ones and turning them around. I'm also a believer in motivating ordinary people to do extraordinary things."

FILEMON Berba, Jr. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Excellent credentials

Berba is an electrical engineer by profession, graduating magna cum laude from the University of the Philippines in 1959. Availing of a scholarship program, he obtained an MBA (with distinction) from the Wharton Graduate School of the University of Pennsylvania.

Not surprisingly, Berba had never had to look for a job. For right after graduation, offers came in profusion. He accepted that of General Electric where he worked as a service engineer until his departure for the States in 1961.

Upon his return three years later, he joined Sycip, Gorres, Velayo (SGV) as supervising consultant of the management services division. To this day, he values having worked with Washington Sycip whom he calls a "visionary" and Cesar Virata, "a symbol of integrity." Berba stayed with SGV for two years.

From there, he forged ahead, becoming VP for manufacturing and logistics services of Unilab, then group president for various projects under the Herdis Group, and in 1979, president of the Westinghouse Asia Controls Corp., a manufacturing firm. He was concurrent president of Westinghouse Electric Asia Pacific, which was regional.

Making companies profitable

In 1987, the Lopezes asked him to head Philippine Electric Corp. (PHILEC), a manufacturing company which was losing money. Berba rehabilitated the company, turned it around and made it profitable.

He reprised this feat for the Ayala Group when he joined them in 1991. Taking over as president and CEO of Integrated Microelectronics, Inc. (IMI), which was then suffering huge losses, Berba ably transformed the company into a profitable one. Following this, he was designated concurrent president and CEO of Globe Telecom, then in its early stage. From 1997 to 1998, he served as president of the Manila Water Company. He is credited for its corporate transformation. Berba was the company's vice chairman and also vice chairman and CEO of IMI when he retired in 2003.

"Working with diverse groups has given me a broader perspective," says Berba. But, he has also discovered that no matter how diverse, there's a certain uniformity in the way people respond. "Understanding the business and its complexities may be of primary importance, but it is not enough. It boils down to people. That's why I believe in having a good HR person. In my case, he is always my frontliner.

Throughout his career, Berba has set a tone of informality and casualness within the organization he has led. He points out, "I have always tried to do away with so much hierarchy. I believe in one-step communication, in putting no barriers between me and my staff. I uphold the open door policy, and I mean that literally." It's just as important to have the loyalty of your staff, he adds. "The only way is to let them know you're sincere and therefore they can trust you." Loyalty, he stresses, can never be imposed. It is always earned.

Lessons in career

Over the years, Berba has been constantly motivated by challenge. Money has never been a primary concern. "Looking back sometimes," he muses, "maybe I should have bargained for more." But, doing his job and giving himself to it is always intensely rewarding. Nothing can equal or surpass the sense of accomplishment that comes with having contributed something vital to an organization.

Berba believes in learning form one's mistakes. He says, "I tell my staff they should not be afraid to make choices, even if they turn out to be wrong. But, they should avoid making the same mistakes twice."

CAREER TALES

A hands-on CEO, Berba believes in transparency and openness in unity and oneness. He sees to it that people have a sense of belonging and ownership. He feels his innate knack for getting along with people is a gift, a bonus. "I believe to have been poor at some point is a blessing because it helps me to relate and understand people better."

Present endeavors

A member of the Board of Regents of UP and of the Board of Trustees of the Philippine Science High School, Berba is founding chairman of the Godparent Program of the Philippine Science High School Foundation whose purpose is to assist financially needy scholars. He has also set up his own scholarship program in Batangas City, his hometown. "There's so much we can do in terms of giving back," he says, pointing out that he initiated the rehabilitation of Balara Park, which had long been neglected. Thanks to his efforts and the support of the Manila Water Company, Balara has been restored to its grandeur.

But, he feels his most significant contribution to business and industry is the concept of professional management. "I believe in getting the best out of people," Berba avers. And though it seems we thrive in the culture of corruption, he remains undaunted. "I've never bribed anyone. Even in this so-called corrupt environment, we've managed to get results in an honest way," Berba prizes integrity above all. He says hard work and doing what is right are the key ingredients of his success.

Simple joys

Far more important to Berba, however, is his family: his three boys and two girls and Maria Paz, his wife of 43 years. Ten grandchildren have further enriched their union. Says Berba, "There is a sense of deep satisfaction in seeing the children doing better than me in many respects. I think my wife and I have raised them well. I, for one, have been able to imbue them with fervent love of country." Though educated abroad, his boys, he explains, have chosen to work and to establish themselves here.

A man of simple tastes, Berba shuns keeping up with the Joneses. Playing a round of golf and fishing are some of his simple joys.

He has this to say to young executives who want to move up: "You should not mind starting at the bottom. As you move up, you will have a better understanding of your job and of the people you work with. The view from above seems somehow clearer when the climb is slow and deliberate. Don't allow yourself to be daunted by difficult tasks and don't forget to think of your country."

Exec urges employers to hire only Tesda-certified workers

By Alan Pelayo
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NAGA CITY—In order to be globally competitive, employers should only hire Technical Education and Skills Development Authority-certified skilled workers in their businesses, advised a high-ranking Tesda executive.

Dr. Alcestis M. Guiang, Tesda director general, called on employers and employer groups to make it mandatory to hire only Tesda-certified skilled workers among their ranks. She said employer groups could do this by coming out with a formal resolution enjoining all member-employers to do this. Guiang, who was here Friday for the launching of the 11th Philippine National Skills Competition 2004 in this city, said this is part of the ongoing certification system of the Tesda, which aims to implement the full certification of all skilled workers in the country, including workers intending to work abroad.

"The Philippines is a signatory to the Regional Model for Competency Standards in the Asia Pacific region. Now, that means if we certify a worker here in the Philippines and then he wants to work in Malaysia, if he is a (certified) technician, then he will be employed as technician. He could not be underemployed," Guiang told INQUIRER in an interview.

"So, it's also a protection (for OFWs). And if countries learn that you are a certified skilled worker, those countries will be confident that you are a competent worker," she added. Guiang also called on skilled workers currently practicing their crafts without certification from Tesda to secure certification from their office now "to increase their employability here and abroad."

She pointed out that Tesda has already started the certification system in the construction and tourism industries, where employer groups have already implemented the mandatory hiring of only Tesda-certified skilled workers.

She said she expects other industry employer groups to follow. "We (Tesda) are serious in implementing it (certification system). As a matter of fact, we already have buildings for assessment centers located all throughout the Philippines. So, any trainee, any worker, or any Filipino who feels that he has already acquired competencies, he can go to the assessment center and apply for assessment or test, then he could be certified (immediately)," Guiang said, adding that assessment can be done through walk-in application or by appointment.

Asked if Tesda could penalize skilled workers practicing their crafts without certification from Tesda, she said: "No. As of now, certification is voluntary, but if you (workers) want to enhance your employability, employers ask for the certification. If you are going out of the country, employers abroad also ask for the certification before you will be issued a visa."

Guiang, however, warned the public against the danger of securing the services of uncertified workers."

She cited for example an uncertified hairdresser who could mix hair treatments incorrectly or an uncertified automotive technician who could fix vehicles improperly."

"All these could be life threatening," she said.

How do you improve your ability to receive feedback?

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: My company has initiated feedback circles and my first review session is coming up. I've got myself worried sick! I don't perform poorly, but tell that to my stomach!

I'd Rather Drink Clorox

Here's a feedback story for you. When two teenagers in Sheboygan, Wisconsin were wondering aloud about how it would feel to get shot in the legs, a nearby relative decided to let them know. He got out his semiautomatic and shot them. Which goes to show, I guess, that you have to be really careful what you ask for.

Fortunately, feedback at work is rarely that injurious. Sure, it's dangerous to ask people to take aim at each other. But if you can go into your feedback session with a positive attitude, the benefits CAN outweigh the risks. Here are some tips for making the experience positive. For more, check out "On The Level" by Pat McLagan and Peter Krebs (Berrett-Kohler, 1995).

Go for the most. The more feedback you get, the less defensive you'll become. So ask for lots of feedback-maybe even more than your company requires. (Who knows? Maybe you'll turn up some really useful information. And since some people are reluctant to offer criticism, asking often increases your chance of hearing from everyone. And don't just ask once, it might take a couple of times for them to warm up to the idea of offering criticism.)

Remember that feedback is also tough to give. The only thing tougher than hearing a tough message is giving one. So empathize with your evaluator. Then, psych yourself out that the person is paying you a compliment by stabbing you in the front, rather than the back.

Tell them what you want. McLagan suggests that you ask three things of the feedbacker. 1. Make your request specific: "What can I do better next time?" rather than "How am I doing?" 2. Ask for information, not an assessment: "What would you like to see me do more often (or less often)?" rather than "Was my performance good?" 3. Give people time to prepare their feedback: "I'd love to get some feedback; could we talk next week?"

Keep cool. Remaining calm while someone is criticizing you maybe the hardest thing you'll ever do at work (or elsewhere!). But what you'll hear by biting your lip might save you from a lot more pain later on.

Practice at home. Most work skills are best left at the office, but here's one you can use at home. Ask your kids and spouse to give you feedback on your performance as a spouse and parent. Not once, but monthly. And give them feedback in response. Sounds dangerous? Only if it's done meanly. And it just could make for closer relationships.

Still feel like you're going into a shooting gallery? Well, think of it this way: the worst kind of feedback is the kind you never hear. So encourage those comments. They can be a terrific shot in the arm.

Here are the results of our last workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com poll:

Which song title best sums up how you want people to give you feedback at work?

— "Don't," 14.6%

— "Hit Me With Your Best Shot," 39.5%

— "Softly," 45.8%

(Mr. Rosner is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

Meralco seen returning to profit

THE MANILA Electric Co., the Philippines' largest power distributor, was expected to have returned to profit in the fourth quarter of 2003, helped by better sales and a price rise, after a huge loss a year earlier.

Debt-laden Meralco, limping from a court-ordered refund of $562 million to customers and the suspension of another price rise, is seen staging a stronger recovery this year as electricity use soars thanks to a general election on May 10 and an improving economy.

Astro del Castillo, managing director of stock brokerage First Grade Holdings, said he saw Meralco's 2003 net profit at P1 billion, in line with the company's forecast, after a net loss of P2 billion in 2002.

A Reuters survey of five brokerages showed that Meralco, which supplies power to about four million homes and businesses in and around Manila, was expected to report a fourth-quarter profit of P350 million to P895 million.

The firm, 25 percent owned by the government and 23 percent by Spanish utility Union Fenosa SA, is due to release its 2003 results this month. *Reuters*

NOT LIKE SARS

Airlines unfazed by Avian flu

By Abigail L. Ho

THE AVIATION industry remained unfazed by the Avian Influenza sweeping nine countries in Asia as birds and fowl delivered via planes were still deemed safe to carry as long as there are quarantine permits.

"The (World Health Organization) has indicated that the highest risk of human exposure to Avian Flu is by those in direct contact with live poultry. Contact with live poultry is not likely for the majority of travelers," the International Air Transport Association said in a statement.

The 280-airlines strong Iata added that it would continue to closely monitor the situation so it could issue proper warnings and directives to its members should the Avian Flu epidemic have any direct effect on civil aviation.

Philippine Airlines Inc. vice president for corporate communications Rolando Estabillo, for his part, said the effect of the Avian Flu outbreak on the industry was not nearly as bad as that of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic.

He expressed optimism that people would not panic as much as they did when the SARS scare peaked during the first half of 2003.

"It's easier now. We hope people will not panic like during the SARS scare. We have learned a lot from the SARS incident. In the airport, they already have a machine that tests for temperature (so suspected SARS virus carriers will not be able to board planes). With the Avian Flu, it looks like the travel industry now knows what to do," he said in an interview yesterday.

He added that the Iata did not issue any directive to its member-airlines to refuse carriage of any birds or fowl as long as there are accompanying quarantine permits.

The Iata, he said, just issued an advisory for air carriers to be "more alert," noting that Avian Flu was not a particularly new phenomenon.

"We are monitoring the situation closely. The international cooperation that successfully combated the SARS virus last year can help in effectively dealing with the current Avian Flu outbreak. We are in daily contact with the WHO and will take immediate action if needed. Travelers should be reassured by the factual and practical advice of the WHO," Iata director general and chief executive Giovanni Bisignani said.

Organic farming: Growing profitable business with a conscience

By Maurice Malanes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

(First of a series)

FEATURE

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—He used to grow roses, which would sell well during the "love month" of February, the wedding season in June, All Saints' Day and Christmas.

In between his rose plants, he interspersed lettuce, celery and onion leeks, which were also profitable.

From his 2,000-square-meter rose and vegetable farm here, he was able to support his way to college.

But it later dawned on Cesar Abalos, now in his mid-30s, that farming was not all about profit.

"The worst thing about raising roses was spraying (the plants with pesticides)," he says, explaining that he was aware of the dangers pesticide contamination posed to his own health and to his surroundings.

While he was wrestling with his conscience, the vegetable industry in the Cordillera was facing its own battles.

One was the adverse effects of the 1991 closure of the American military bases in Central Luzon, which was one of the biggest markets for tropical vegetables, particularly lettuce, celery and leeks.

The most recent is the impact of globalization.

Imported, and even smuggled, cheaper vegetables continue to threaten the local vegetable industry.

But even before the threats of globalization struck vegetable farmers in 2002, Abalos was already exploring other farming options, one of which was organic farming.

Going organic has solved one thing that Abalos hated about tending roses—spraying pesticides.

Now almost four years after he converted into organic farming, Abalos says he is confident that the broccoli, Chinese spinach, bell pepper, and tomatoes are healthy.

"And my conscience is always clear, knowing full well that my customers' health and safety are ensured," he says.

Conscience is a key factor that spells the difference for organic farming converts like Abalos.

Another convert is Greg Kitma.

With a leather cowboy hat to protect him from the mid-morning sun, Kitma digs plots in his farm at his home-village some 4 km southwest of Baguio City's downtown.

Being incorporated into the plots are black-dark brown particles with wiggling earthworms. The black-dark brown stuff is humus-filled compost, which Kitma himself prepared using horse manure and decayed weeds and grasses.

"This (compost) is enough to sustain what I'm going to plant here for the whole cropping season," he says.

As he lifts his hoe, he explains the basics of what he calls "bio-dynamic farming."

"The basic principle in bio-dynamic farming is to activate, if not bring back, the life of the soil," says Kitma.

"The quality of food that we grow largely depends on the health and life of the soil," he says. "The healthier the soil, the healthier and more life-giving the food we grow."

Real benefits

Through nature's way, plants get food from the soil with the help of the sun through a process called photosynthesis.

If the soil contains all the necessary elements, plants can produce real proteins, carbohydrates, enzymes and vitamins and minerals to ensure human health.

But conventional chemical farming has since been producing vegetable crops, which may be robust and big, but lack the vital trace elements and other substances that humans and animals need to be healthy and alive, says Kitma.

"Thus it is important to restore and sustain the life of the soil to ensure not only our health and lives but also the health and lives of our children and their children, who ultimately are going to inherit the land," he says.

Dedicated farmers

Abalos and Kitma are among few farmers in the Cordillera who are dedicated to make a difference in vegetable farming and marketing.

"Some people view organic farming as backward, but this actually goes hand-in-hand with preserving our environment and sustaining our land," says Abalos.

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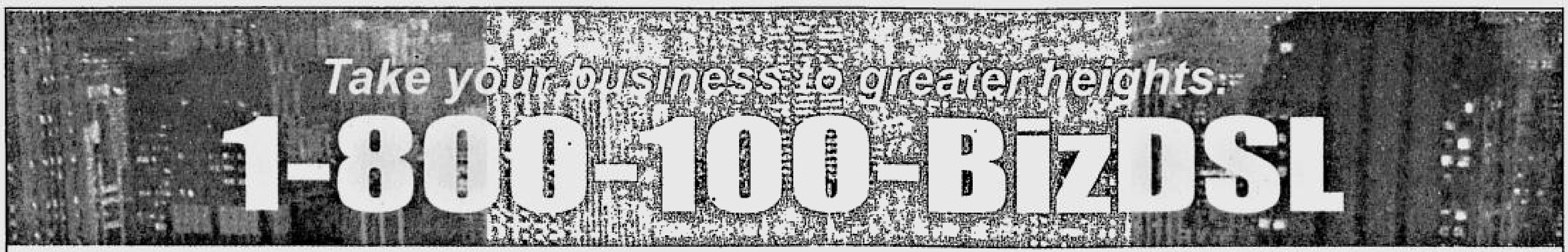

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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
Chief of Correspondents **Pam Pastor**

Part One

Love scrapbook

Romance. Infatuation. Obsession. Pain. Breakups. Regrets. Friendship. Family. Unrequited affections. Goodbyes. Frustration. Roller-coaster emotions. An endless search. A challenge. An elusive gift. Temptation. Weakness. Strength.

Love means so many things to so many people.

In this issue, 2bU! correspondents and readers bare their souls. Enjoy our collage. Our memories could be yours, too.

Four things I love and hate about you

By Rosa Villanueva

FOUR things I love about you: your smile, your commitment to everything you do, your concern for everything I do and your love.

Four things that make me want to turn this into forever: the way you love your family, the way you love God, the way you love your friends and the way you love me.

Four things that caught my eye when I first met you: the way you carried yourself, the way you stood when I arrived, your height, and how you listened to everything I said and filed it in your brain.

Four things I hated about you after I first met you: you didn't even walk me to my car, you wanted to end the night so early, you didn't send the customary post-meeting text and you didn't call until two days later.

Four things that made me want to date you again after hating you: your forwarded messages first thing in the morning that are really cheesy and stupid sometimes but makes me smile nonetheless, your calling in the middle of the day just to tell me you're stuck in traffic and you thought of me, your staying in Manila two extra days to go on two dinner dates one after the other and your keeping your hands to yourself the entire time.

Four things I wish I could do for you: learn how to sit properly, learn how to drive carefully, learn how to walk gracefully and learn how to keep my hands off junk food and soft drinks.

Four things I promise you: to stay, to avoid quitting just because things are rough, to quit nagging when I'm pissed or PMSing, and to sit still and be content.

Happy fourth.

Be my Valentine

A PASSION FOR MUSIC
A celebration of music & love in the month of hearts.

February 14
Featuring:
Willy Cruz (Pianist)
6:00pm

Keys to the Heart
An evening with **Carlos Alberto Ibay**
(Tenor and Pianist)
8:30pm

February 15
Perfectly Acoustic 2
featuring **Kyla, Kitchie Nadal, Sugarfree & Stone Free**
4:00pm

Turning Tides
with the **U.P. Med Choir**
7:00pm

February 22
Paolo Santos Live
4:00pm

February 29
Acoustic Piano
featuring **Dominic and Burton**
4:00pm

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LOGO 1KISS
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The spoiled brat that's the luv of my life

He's a 5-year-old charmer who has stolen my heart

By Ruth Navarra

WHAT rotten luck! My 5-year-old cousin stole my heart.

He's spoiled. When it comes to getting what he wants, he has written the definitive tactic book. He'd kiss, cajole, beg and brighten his big, black eyes until you do what he asks.

Of course, you can say "no" to him. He'll even hug you if you explain to him the reason why. He'll go on with his life for about 15 minutes, and then he'll come back to you asking the same favor. He thinks that 15 minutes is enough time for you to think about what he said.

He likes to show off. The pride of his youth nowadays is composed of regaling how his King Koopa defeated the Mario Brothers in a race track. He never really outgrew his fondness for dinosaurs, dragons—any creature with scales.

Sometimes he thinks he's Spider-man. He'd point his palm in different directions expecting a strong mutant web to come out of it; which explains why he has no fear of heights. He'd jump from two-foot-high boxes with no regard whatsoever for his safety.

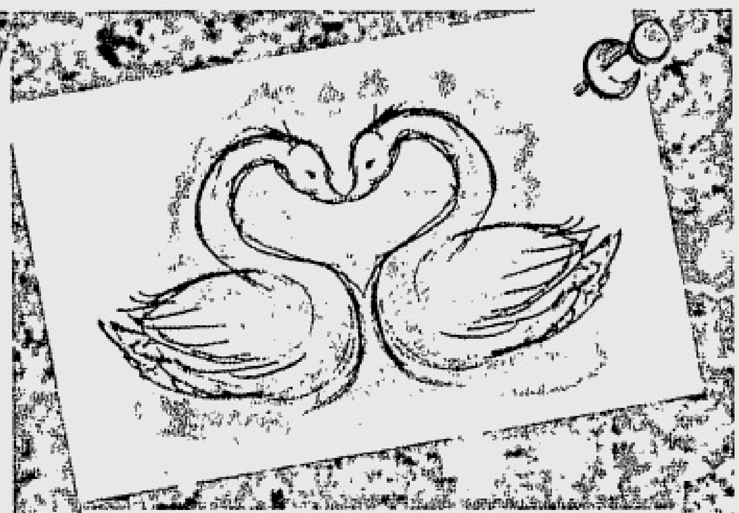
He's a fashionista in the making. He chooses his own clothes. Sometimes, he'd imitate the style sported by his two brothers. He'd ask them to gel his hair even if there's nothing to gel. He'd spray their Axe body cologne on his clothes. But he doesn't like it if they use his star-shaped soap.

I taught him how to appreciate "Harry Potter," and he taught me how to enjoy "Blues Clues." He likes to impress me with his singing the "ABC Song," but he wouldn't mind if I sing "Twinkle Twinkle" so he can go to sleep.

Over the years, we have come up with different nicknames for him. My personal favorite however, is "Bilog." A name derived from his round face emphasized by baldness. But I remember worshipping him when his hair was still long, soft and curly.

I know time will come when I don't have to bend over so he can whisper how much he loves me on my ear.

So I'm stuffing my brains with memories that'll get me by when the urge to hug him tightly, till he's gasping for breath, hits me in a public place and he's 20.



Motion sickness

By Crow's Slave

HE barrelled into my consciousness like a runaway rollercoaster—uncontrollable, irrevocable. Dangerous.

I didn't know what I was agreeing to. I was smiling when the bars came down. It took me a few seconds to realize I was trapped, and by then, there was no getting out.

Not that I wanted to. Right there, at that particular moment, it was everything I wanted. I liked his speed, his almost psychotic fascination with strength. I never thought I'd come to fear him.

But I did. It was too much. Too much, too fast, too painful. Too permanent. And why not? I'd agreed, after all. I'd agreed to go along for the ride.

I thought I'd gotten out of it years ago. I thought I'd escaped, that perhaps I'd fallen to an almost-death and lived. I thought that was it, the grand finale, the big bang.

I guess not. Because one hint of a repeat performance and I'm back where I started, feeling the familiar beginning breeze on the face that had once been wind-whipped, that old habit to raise my arms in virtual surrender to the rules of the game. One word and I'm back on the same godforsaken track: a different car, a faster ride, but always, always the same track.

I already know where this one leads. And sure, I could do the right thing, the smart thing. I could get off, turn on my heel, spit a "f--k you" on the cement and never come back again.

But no. No, I am stubborn. And as if I didn't still know by heart its sharp drops, its every perilous turn—I have to ride it one more time.

Love and let live

By Jay Beltran

I DIED.

I died the day you left me, I've been buried with your love and I'm feeding maggots with my brain. The chandelier in my tomb has stopped turning. I've turned off its lights because I got no use for it. I died the day you said goodbye.

I died the day you left me. I've been lying here in my coffin while death and decay have started feasting on me. I've been the perfect host for earthworms and ants and parasites of all sorts. And I'm like a cowardly dog that can't even scratch my itch. I feel nothing.

I died the day you walked away.

I died the day you left me. I've been hanging out on my own for a couple of months now. I've been killing time just as you killed me.

I died the day you stepped out of the car.

I died and there ain't no coming back. Not until you resurrect me. You alone have the hands to pull me out of hell. You can charm the death stalker and breathe life into me again.

Love and let me live again.

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Everyday soulmates

By The Pharaoh

FOLKLORE has it that every person has a soulmate, a twin soul, a self other than your being that is so like and unlike the original. It is like the coin with two sides and while one can exist without the other, life becomes more full and whole when both meet and become one.

I was in my nth relationship when I met my soulmate. I had a girlfriend and we were okay. She had a boyfriend and they were likewise okay.

But it was something this girl mentioned during a late-night dinner at a popular fastfood outlet in Diliman that struck me.

She was relating to everyone *not* her childhood adventures but *mine*.

It was about how she played with insects (cockroaches, mainly) and tortured them like slaves before killing them (slowly dropping hot candlewax on their heads and torsos while watching them die).

"This can't be true. This can't be happening," I thought. I was the only person who had those memories and I hadn't told anyone about them simply because I didn't think they were dinner stories.

And this girl had managed to transform my dark side into a lovely comedy act that had all of our friends laughing in stitches.

That was how it began three years ago. Since that night, her presence has haunted me even when I'm alone. Now we're inseparable.

Our pet names are *"kambal ko"* (my twin). For the third straight year, we have seen each other every day. The longing for each other still amazes us.

Our past and growing-up years revealed a lot of similarities: We both grew up in coastal areas (Navotas and Lemery, Batangas), we were both left alone at home by our working parents, we were both straight valedictorians and honor students from kinder through collegiate years, we were raised by elderly people and yes, we played with disgusting insects.

We celebrate Valentine's Day everyday, even on Good Friday. This Valentine's Day, we will once more try to upstage each other in terms of gift surprises and love offerings.

Lament for a love preordained

By Expectorant

I DON'T know why things happen the way they do. They just happen, time and again.

Why is it that in our hearts we both knew we were bound to meet? That there seemed to be things in the universe that conspired to make it happen? That it was only a matter of time before we met. And when we did, it could only be momentous.

The day we met could only have happened then, not years or decades or centuries ago. And certainly not 10 years into the future, way late of schedule. Because long before, long after or until then, we could not have trodden the looping paths that would bring us together. We could not have encountered the little things that drew us together. We could not have talked about why some things happen once in a hundred years.

There's no one like you. You were the rare comet that illumined my long, dark night. You were the flower that bloomed just when hope was about to wilt. You were the rain that quenched my thirst in the long dry spell, the temblor that shook me from my stupor, the volcano that gushed forth lava, scalding my dormant heart.

Your star burns bright only once in a hundred years; no, not even in a hundred years. I was an utter fool to have let you go.

Infatuated

By Aurie Anden

I IMAGINE you sometimes: immaculate white feathers towering behind you... soft... brushing against my cheek in a daydream... I delight in the sensation.

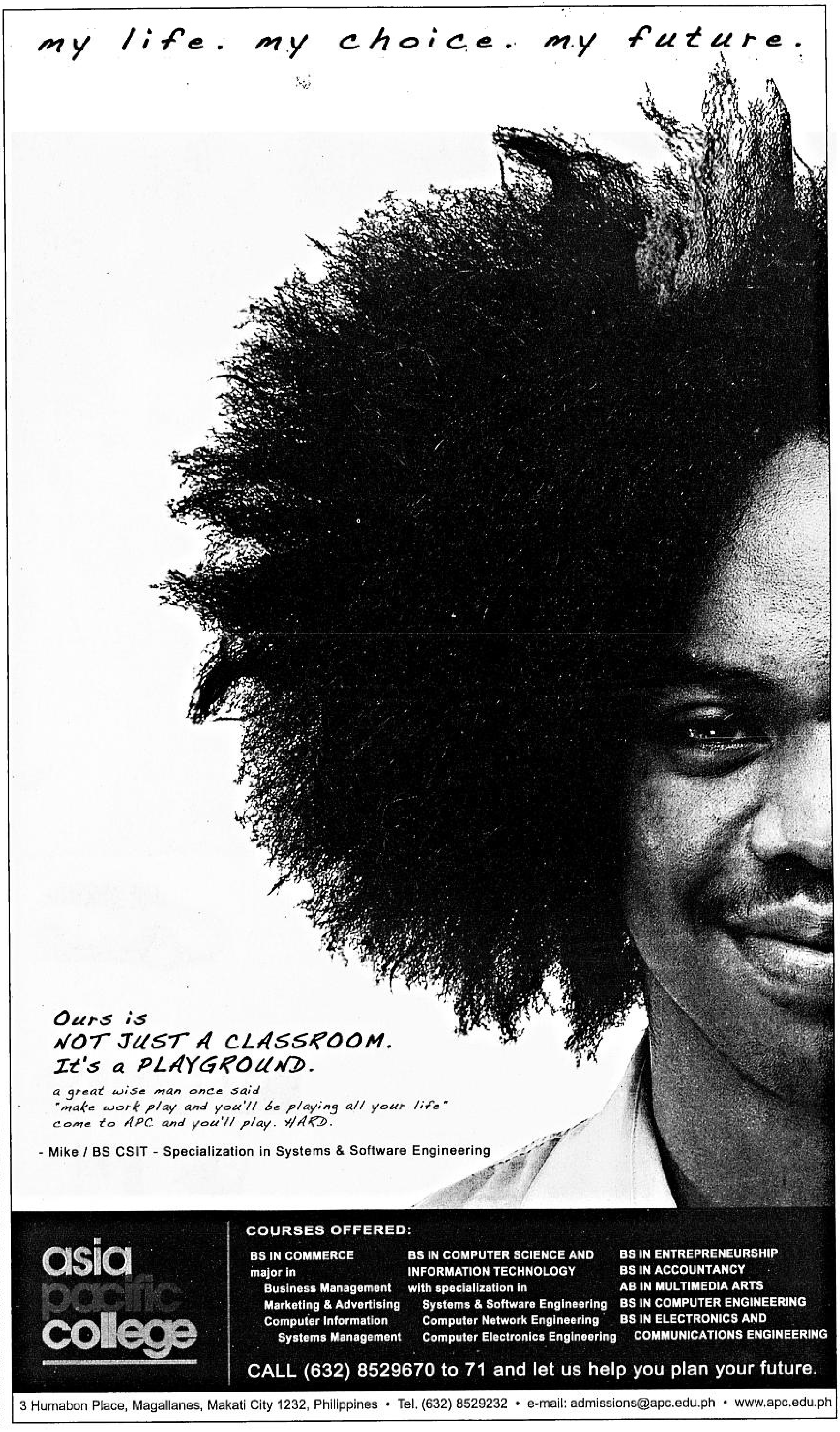
Your gentle brown eyes have a language unique to them. They share your thoughts with me. Strange... that I should know what they speak of, even before you mouth them.

Your lips break to a smile; you reveal a row of imperfect teeth, which, in reality, makes you even more perfect.

I sometimes feel guilty because of this amazement I have for you. When I am in your presence, my body seems attracted to yours. My mind is infatuated, my eyes almost instinctively rest fondly on your face.

I detest the bewilderment. I detest the divine connection our souls appear to have. I detest these moments of theft.

Yet, I long. I long...



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Here with me

By Linus Velasco Tiu

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Dido. Her song "Here with me." My wife of one year and three months nicknamed "Babes" since she's the youngest of seven. She's six months pregnant. A whiteboard. Stuck in an office for nine hours. Add three more for my morning and evening commute.

The sweet swirling memories that I can barely contain as of this moment of my wife. Dido's voice. Her song "Here with me."

Did that make any sense at all? Let me try again. My wife means the world to me. A cliché, perhaps, but it's the truth. From the moment I leave for the office in the morning, I am left with a longing image of her at the door, bidding me a good day and a safe trip. All throughout my workday, I am filled with wishes of going home to her warmth and our unborn baby. (Yes, amid all this, I do get some work done). Traveling home sucks because traffic is worse, hence I am all the more anxious to get home.

Dido and her song? Well, it represents all the yearning I can ever muster to the point of tears (damn song) when I miss my wife. Each time I hear it, I feel like there's no other place in the world that I'd rather be than with her. She is home to me. "Here with me" reminds me of home. The whiteboard? Because it's there. In my cubicle, to be precise.

Let me digress. This'll make sense when you put it together. I think. A friend of mine once asked me if I believed in something cheesy like destiny. I told her no, but having met my wife, I can now answer "yes." I didn't bother philosophizing or analyzing it. To do so would rob me of the romantic beauty of life that my wife gives me.

It seems that with this kind of "assignment," there is no escaping the trap of being corny, sappy or "*baduy*." It seems that with these kinds of assignments, there is no real way of starting or ending. Or is there? It doesn't matter. But let me try ending it anyway as cool as I can. Here goes.

"I won't go, I won't sleep, I can't breathe, until you're resting here with me."

Moments

By Patrick Cabalu

ALL you get is a moment. If you're lucky. A moment, and you continue your life, never seeing the big picture.

You get these moments in your life, you get enough to last you your entire life. Tiny moments, cute and nostalgic at times, spread far and wide, and few and far in between. You get enough that you think that a moment is forever.

But it never is.

The moment goes, it fades, it dies. Like a fire. Burning strong and powerful, reduced to ashes and smoke the next day.

The heart is such an organ of fire.

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She gets to you and you're never the same. She turns your world inside out, upside down, round and round. She comes in and settles in. Takes her shoes off, props her feet up on the coffee table, walks around in her underwear. She settles in. Cooking meals, sharing a pint of ice cream, watching the sunrise. She walks in and comes into your life and you're never the same. Ever.

There's your moment. Lived so complete and true at one point, but destined to be lost in time, slowly fading from your memory, dying bit by bit, your memories, you, gone, forever.

She comes in and destroys your entire world.

What you are is past tense.

You spend years building this routine, this pattern, this life of yours. You spend years in comfort, knowing exactly what to expect from each day that passes. You work, you eat, you go home. For a while you begin to think that that's enough to live. You spend years putting everything in place. Your furniture, your clothes, your car. Years upon years upon years of hard work, making sure that everything goes according to plan. Your plan. You spend years feeling safe and secure. You're thinking, nothing can break this. Nothing can destroy what I've built around me. Castle. Fortress. Sanctuary.

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Norah Jones

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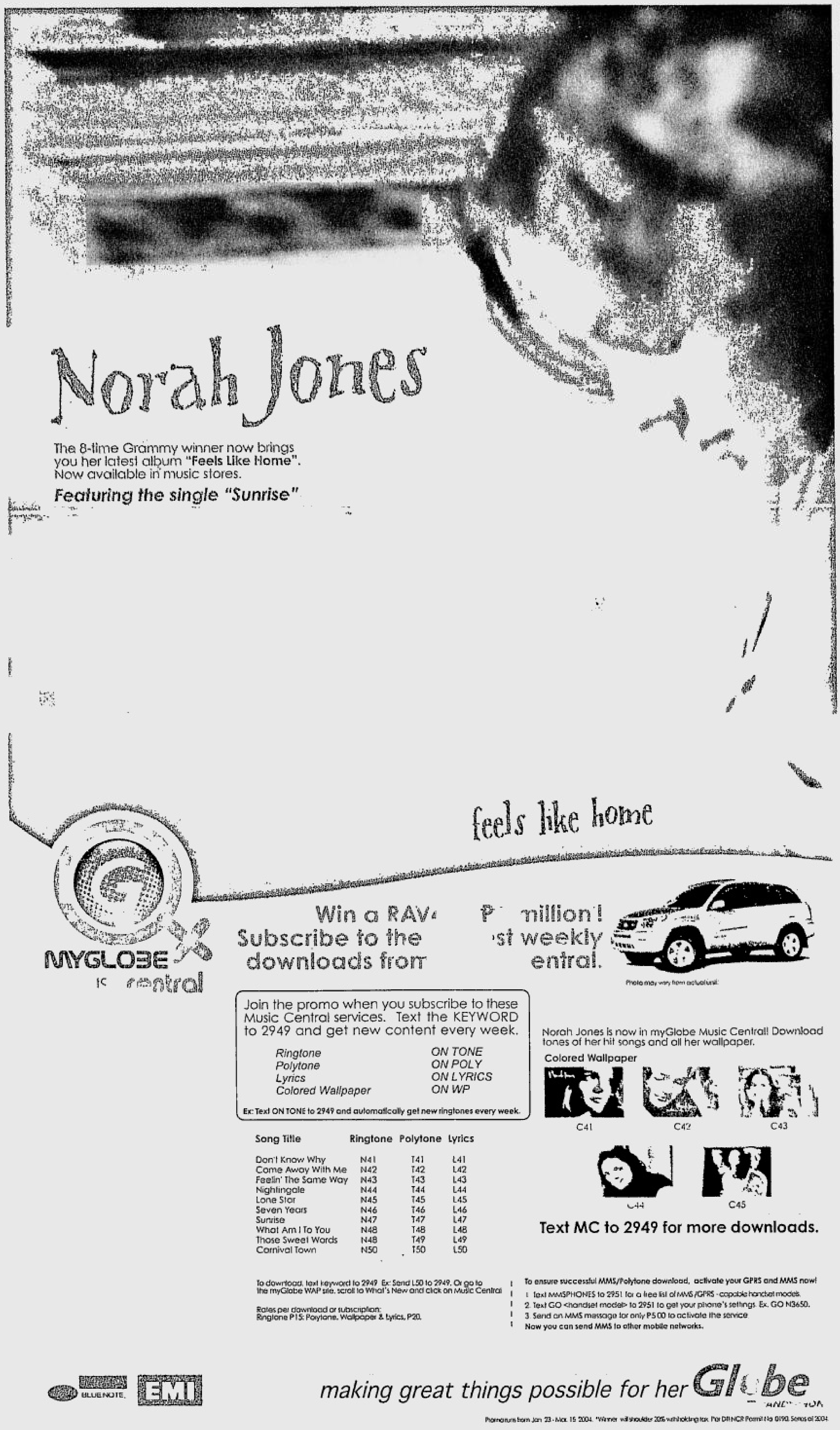

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Contrast

By Pam Pastor

FEB. 7, 2003

Sad thought while passing by Dangwa on my way to school.

"So many flowers, none of them for me."

Comforting thought after thinking about the men who will brandish said flowers exactly a week from now.

"So many losers, none of them mine."

Jan. 27, 2004

When he was in the university—the same one I went to a few years too late—it was his secret fantasy to have a girlfriend from my college.

And so last night, when he picked me up from my office, I surprised him by wearing my old uniform.

Yes, we're all about making him happy.

Yes, this is the place where dreams come true.

Friends who heard of my plan only had one question.

"Will your uniform still fit you?"

Yes, freakos, it did.

Ask Ruthie.

Ruthie stood by the door and giggled like mad with me as I completed the transformation.

She even wanted me to braid my hair Pippi Longstocking-style like I used to do in college. But I settled for a very high, very perky, very bouncy ponytail.

We snuck out of the office and got into her car, praying the entire time that no one would see us.

"Ruthie, are you embarrassed?"

"No, I'm very proud of you."

Ruthie drove to the front of our office building and pulled over in the parking space beside his.

She rolled down her window and signaled for him to do the same.

When he saw me, he started laughing.

Ruthie wanted to join in on the fun because she wanted to see him squirm.

But she ended up squirming.

"*Bakit ang* cute *mo ha*?" he called out from his car.

"*Ikaw* cute!" I yelled back from Ruthie's car.

Ruthie shuddered and muttered, "I can't take this anymore."

So she zoomed off into the night.

He was still laughing when I got into the passenger seat.

"You're crazy," he said, shaking his head.

"I know."

"I love you and your craziness."

He drove off to our place where he made me laugh by doing this silly little dance.

Then we hung out near our old university, talking, laughing and crying while he enjoyed the best cheese steak sandwich in the world.

One dream down.

A lifetime's worth of desires to go.

I can't wait to try and make them all come true.

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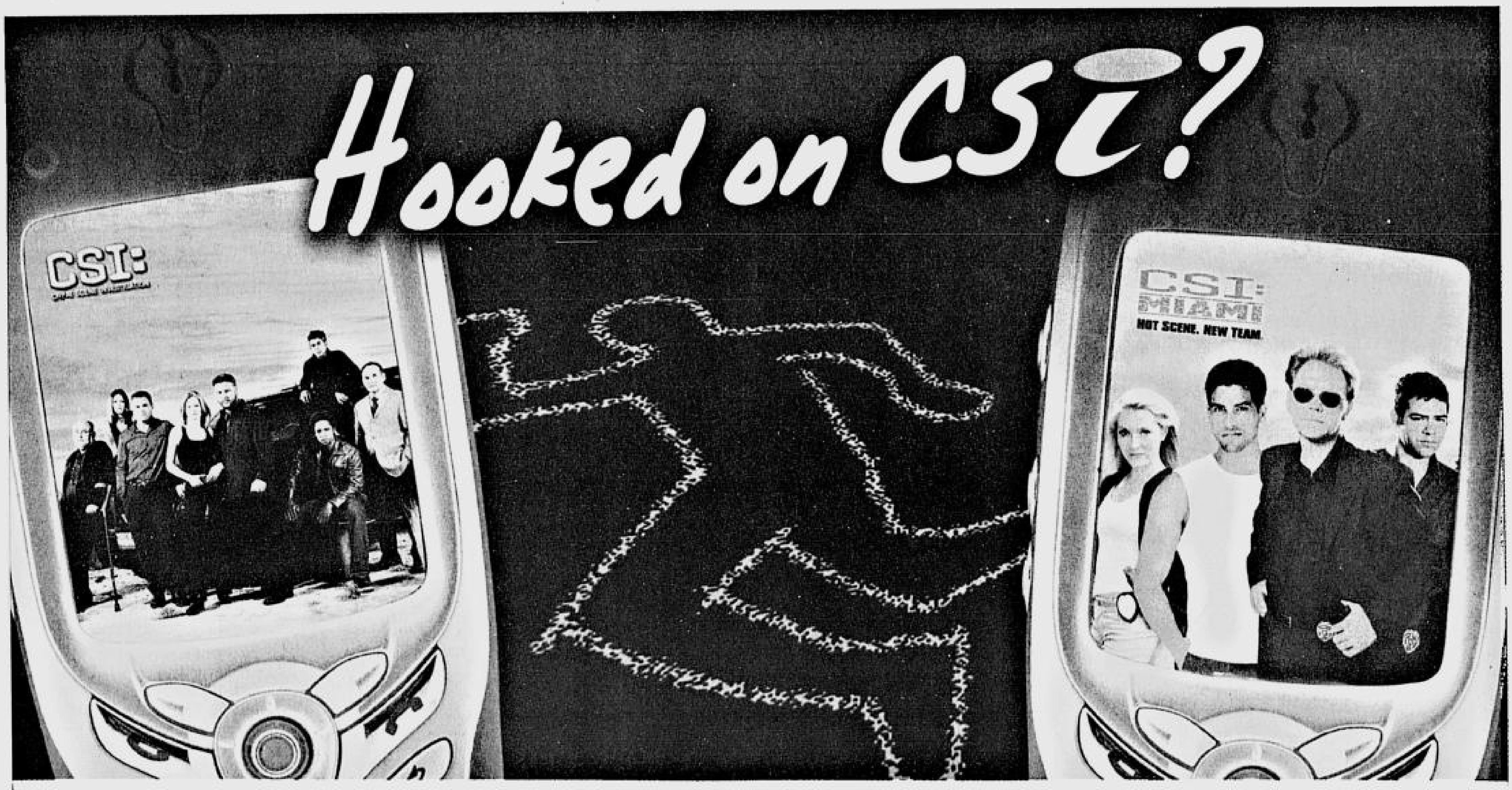
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love defined

By Kristine Caguiat

IT BEATS through your heart, burns through your skin and melts your senses. It encompasses all human emotion and justifies all human reason.

It holds no bounds, breaks all barriers, scales all heights and defies all depths. It is a question that answers all inquiry, and an answer that questions all knowledge; a mystery of the mind and a secret of the soul.

Indescribable, immeasurable, indefinable.

It is pure, undefiled and simple.

It is the unknown, the utopian, the dream of all dreamers.

It is the core, the polestar, the center, the beginning.

It runs courses, lacerates sentiment and intensifies passion.

It is romance.

A taste of heaven, a sensation of bliss.

It is faith and conviction.

It's an aura in the atmosphere.

It is multiplied: over and over and over again.

It's louder than the storms, deeper than the floods, more blinding that the sun and the most electrifying of all forces.

It is elemental.

It is beautiful and stunning.

It's words, words, words.

Ironies and paradoxes, going in circles, never to be answered; riddles of feeling.

A touch, a kiss, a priceless show of affection.

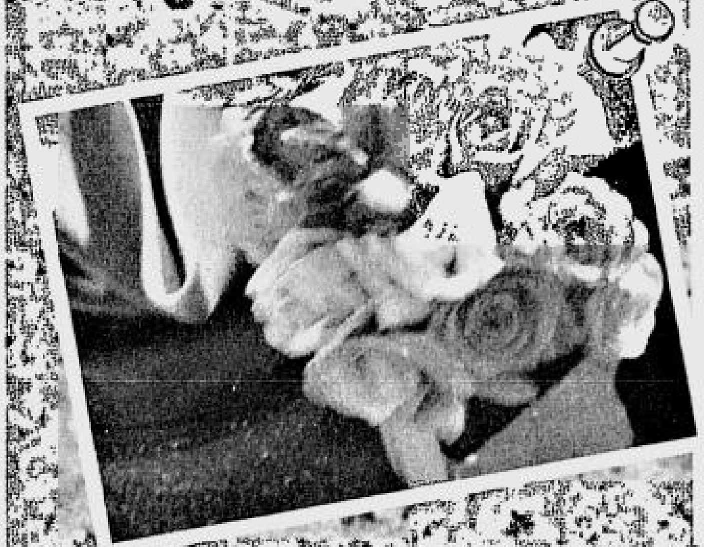
It is delight and happiness.

It's ecstasy.

It can combat forces, destroy destruction, and end war.

It is life and death all over again.

It is love.



The unsaid

In a field trip, romance blossoms as a sub

By Ernani A. Reyes

BUS. Seat beside the window. Girl reader is absorbed in St. Exupery's "The Little Prince." She's interrupted by classmates' boisterous laughter. Girl friend offers her a potato chip. Hand dunking inside the canister, she engages in conversation while munching on.

"What is essential is invisible to the eye." Elbow resting on the windowsill, girl takes a break and stares outside. Hand cradling her head, she admires the clouds and the fields underneath. Inner peace is suddenly disrupted. The pest who just sat next to her is the culprit. "Howwazzup?" he asks. She answers curtly.

Pest realizes girl is in no mood for conversation. Roaming back and forth the narrow aisle, he keeps bugging everyone he passes since the trip started. He can't keep still in one place. When he runs out of people to plague, he goes back to her.

"'The Little Prince'...good book. I've read it myself...almost cried in the end when...oh, you haven't finished it yet?? Tsk, tsk. Pity you. You're missing an excellent plot by just staring at those stupid cows?!

"Oh please...spare me the lecture, will you?! My world was perfect until you came."

But mine was not.

One of his buddies yell at him.

No, don't go. Stay here beside me.

"You deaf or something? Jeb's calling you... don't make him wait. And this seat will be taken in case you return," eyebrow crooking.

He goes.

Why am I always pushing myself away? Why am I always pushing him away for crying out loud?

An eternity later:

"Hey, Miss Nerdy Bookworm...you look like you need to eat. You're pale as a ghost!" He throws a big bag of unopened potato chip on her opened book.

"This seat is already taken! Why'd you come back here, why'd you keep tormenting me? Can't you just go away?"

What took you so long? Why'd you keep me waiting? I've been anticipating for you all this time and now that you're here, I won't lose you. I won't let it happen to us ever again. Stay with me...

"I don't see anyone sitting here. And who says I can't sit here? You're not the queen of England... and this is a free country. I can sit wherever I want to... and heck, I can have whatever I want."

And I want you. I want to be with you. You are my girl from the very start, but I was the fool who threw it all away. I was stupid and blind, couldn't see the best gift any guy could ever have. There was never 'us'... at first. But now I'm gonna make it right. Girl, you make me weak in the knees. It's such a shame I chose temporary pleasure over true happiness. I won't let anything come between us anymore. My beloved Aphrodite, please forgive me and give my love a chance.

Girl breaks her restraint and engages pest in conversation. Boy lightens up. They talk. Moments later, the bus stops and everyone steps down. Their destination is a historical landmark. Every student goes his own way.

Pictures are taken. Pest happens to pass by and sees his girl in front of the camera, posing solo.

If things were well, she wouldn't be standing there alone.

I wouldn't be standing alone if everything were better.

They stop in one destination after the other. Pest sees girl alone walking briskly in front of him. He sco over, but another guy grabs her the hand and pulls her over t cooler place. He stops, unbelievin

Get your freakin' hands off her!

Sean... oh! I thought you're hi What a waste... wished you w him...

The day is drawing to a close, time to go home. But the bu seem headed in a differ route—to the mall—elicit shouts of joy. The day of leisur not yet over. Off they go in differ directions.

Girl is left behind, stroll alone. Her hands wrapped arou herself, the coldness sinking in. S is startled when an arm wr around her shoulders.

"Miss Sage... why are you alone? Where are your friends? Y look like you're lost. Need so company?"

"I am not lost! I am perfec aware where am I. And I am alone.. they're just right o there..."

"No they're not. And they l you. Good thing I was around a found you."

They left you, all right. To with me. I'll always be arou

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love and loss in February

By Samantha Ang
2bU! Correspondent

LAST year was not a happy Valentine's. Just a few days after Feb. 14, my grandfather passed away.

While everyone was happily stringing paper hearts and playing love songs, we were in the hospital looking after him.

We could only watch him helplessly as he struggled through the final stages of his sickness. He was such a fighter, my grandfather.

Two years before, after being diagnosed with the dreaded "C" word, he bravely underwent surgery after surgery to remove the cyst. Although the doctors already gave him about six months to live, he miraculously surpassed them and lived on for more than a year. We became hopeful at his chances of recovery. Doctors—what did they know?

But the cancer cells weren't about to give up that easily and he slowly deteriorated soon afterwards.

Last year, while everyone was feeling all sentimental and romantic, we were preparing ourselves for the inevitable day when we would lose him. We cried a lot during that time. We cried for his life, we cried for his loss, we cried for everything, even the littlest of things.

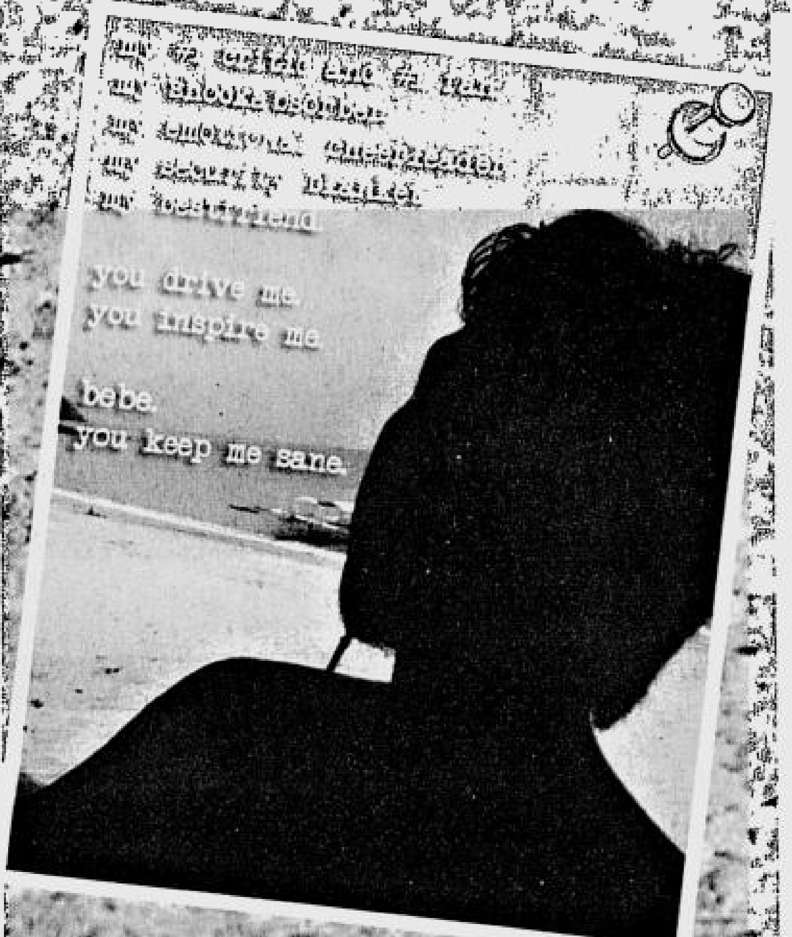
My grandfather was such an admirable man. He didn't drink, didn't smoke. He was a model husband, a loving father and a kind grandfather, among plenty of others. It was hard to understand and accept why God had chosen him instead of some heartless criminal who deserved to be wiped out from this planet.

But then, I began to realize that death was not really the end of everything. You see, when I was younger, it had never crossed my mind that one day, someone from our family would be gone. I used to think that life was perfect for our family.

We were a close-knit bunch, despite of our large number. Every Sunday is like one big family reunion since we would all hear Mass together and eat out afterwards. We were happy. Complete. Losing a part of our "unit" didn't seem entirely possible. Just like the foundations being taken off a building, I thought that if that would happen, our family would simply collapse and nothing would be the same again.

Thankfully, however, our family didn't fall apart the way I thought it would. My grandfather may be gone, true, but it doesn't mean that the family and the love also died with him. We are still here and we have each other.

So it's February again. Who says Valentine's Day is only for couples? Use this day instead to express your love for the people in your life, and do enjoy the company before it's too late. That's what Valentine's Day should be about: a celebration of love and life.



Unsent le

By Bunny Anne Gapit
2bU! Correspondent

NOV. 1, 1999

Should I tell you? I am glad you're not so strong these days. Otherwise I'd have gone crazy for failing to trade words with you on the Net. Keavy...Keavy... I think I love you, but how would you know?

Nov. 3, 1999

Confessed my love for you on the Net. I was "bangenge," I didn't care how straight my messages were, but I think people are truer when they're *bangenge.*

June 10, 2000

I remember Teri. I admit I loved her a little more intensely than you, Keaves. But I don't think it matters anymore because it is you whom I genuinely love now. My whole soul.

No date

Something tells me we deserve the life that we're living. And in that sense, you are so fortunate. I don't think I am. But everything turns out okay as long as I know you. It's not even a struggle. I still am thankful I got to love you. It does not matter how unrequited. I love you and you are all I have. Please just be kind.

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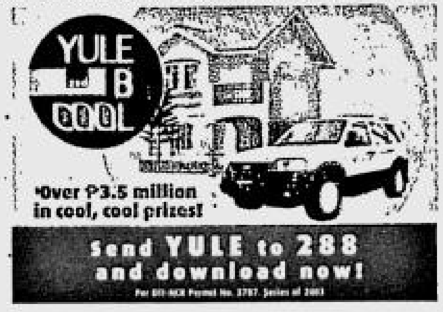
Per DTI-NCR Permit #4864, Series of 2003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text

whenever you need me, honey. Then, I was lost. Now I found myself in you.

"The nerve... Get your hands off me, ok"

I'd be lost without you. You are my beacon, my North Star. Forever shine your light on me. Then, we started out us friends. Now, I'm hoping... now will be different.

On the way home, weariness hangs in the air. Some try to nap, others are busy with their phones.

Girl is tired and a bit cold. Someone settles near her and searches for her hand underneath her jacket. Without opening her eyes he feels her boy's hand cradling hers.

I'd never expected to fall for you. But when I did, you weren't there to catch me.

How can I be so blind? I never saw it coming, but when I did, it was almost over.

I never looked before I jumped. And all I got were cuts and bruises.

I ignored you, thinking I was too perfect for you. What a dumbass! And now I'm paying for it

But I never stopped believing... I never stopped hopping...

I'll never forgive myself for the scars I've caused you...

One thing I only regret... not telling you the truth.

One thing I only regret... not realizing earlier that you're everything to me.

But even now, I can't bring myself to reveal my heart.

Until this day, I can't say out loud and shout at the top of my lungs that I love you with all of me!

With you, I feel secure. You complete me.

For you, I'll lay the world at your feet. You are my everything.

I've only loved once, but it will be for always.

Forever will not be enough to love you.

From now on, I'll always let you know how deep is my love.

From this day forward, I'll keep my vow of love to you from here to eternity.

From the depths of my soul.
From the depths of my soul.
My Prince...
My Rose...
"Sage..."
"Sean...?"

Bus. Bright lights. Fuel truck. Screeching sound. Screams. The world suddenly turning upside down...

What if

By Ara Villafuerte

RIGHT now, I'm thinking, what if?
what if I'm the one who calls you "hon" or "babe" or whatever the hell she calls you...
what if I'm the one you pick up wherever at the end of the day...
what if I'm the last person you talk to at night...
what if it's my hand you're holding...
what if it's my back you're guiding...
what if there's "us"...
what if we gave it a shot...
and a good one at that.
What if it's me you kiss...
what if it's me you love...
would it have made me any happier?
would it have made a difference?
would all of these have given me what I think I want?
would it make YOU happy?
really, man.
I'm thinking.

Passion of mind

By Starlight

I DREAM of a love that is passionate.
To exchange mischievous grins
and secret whispers in darkened rooms.
Candlelit dinners,
Sensual fantasies.
...Cocktail dresses and
Lacey underwear.
To run around in a park, in a mall,
...Or be simply breathless, without running at all.
To Laugh. Loud, boisterous laughter. Whole-hearted laughter,
Feeling it from the gut.
...Hours later, still grinning.
To cry, cry like the tears will never stop,
...Like the tears will never be enough.
To dance, in a garden with the sprinklers on,
...Or in front of the TV, to the background music in a two-minute commercial.
To sing, in the shower, in the kitchen, in the car,
To a song playing on the radio...
Or simply in my head.
...The tune of a woman in love.
To talk for hours and excitedly await
The next conversation.
To hug and be lost in our world,
And never want to let go.

Be my Valentine.

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Reflections of a one-woman hunk

By Lorenzo C. Angel

I HAD my first girlfriend when I was 23 years old.

It wasn't that I acquired the habit of looking at the opposite sex quite late in my life. In fact, I've had crushes way back when I was six years old. I had been admiring and looking at girls for quite a long time. The trouble is, they keep looking the other way.

It did not help that I was naturally shy. During my early teens, friends would be going out with girls from a nearby exclusive school while seventh heaven for me simply required being smiled at by an attractive Scholastican. Pathetic, isn't it?

Even when I did get the courage to talk to those interesting species in white and navy blue uniforms, I did not fare very well. While they seemed interested enough to talk to me, I never struck them as "boyfriend material," something I found extremely absurd because I knew I was good-looking.

I consoled myself with the thought that maybe high school was not my time. But wait till I get to college. I was bound to meet my perfect girl there.

Things, however, did not turn out as I had expected. I did meet a lot of lady friends, but when I attempted to bring the friendship to the next level, I was brought back to earth with remarks like how I reminded them of the younger brother they never had, or how great a friend I was, but...

Rejection was the order of things for me, even two years after college.

Then, at 23, I met the woman who finally said "yes" to me. Five years later, we got married.

So how does it feel to finally meet the woman of my dreams?

Except for the first few months when everything had seemed too good to be true, my life has been quite ordinary. One thing I realized is that if you cannot find happiness living with yourself, you will never find it living with another person. After all, if you cannot accept who you are, why pass the burden to someone else?

Living with the man or woman of your dreams can be an exhilarating experience, but you cannot expect the thrill to last forever. Sooner or later, you will notice (as my own wife did) that the Prince Charming or the Sleeping Beauty bundled next to you would seem more charming if his snoring did not sound like a train wreck.

Finding love does not necessarily mean finding the perfect person to share your life with. It simply means seeing perfection in the imperfect person you choose to love, and willing the good of that person.

Twenty three years was a long time to wait for my lifetime partner. But as far as I am concerned, she was worth waiting for.

ers for Keavy

Have you ever lived this kind of longing? I wonder, are you also somebody's fool? Do you love more than I can? Thoughts of you keep me breathing.

Oct. 24, 2000

I write in blue because I love you. It is not your favorite color but blue most represents my truest feelings for you. I just missed my schoolfriends today, Keaves. And after that I missed you, too. Why, I don't know. I couldn't believe I miss them! I don't want to miss them. Then I thought of you. And I realized it's really you whom I'm missing so much. How can I miss someone I've never even met?

Nov. 9/10, 2000

Believe me, there's no Simon, Maribeth, Christian, whoever in my life. It's only you. They're all fictitious. And even if you don't care, I still want you to know there's no one else. It's always been you. Believe me.

Nov. 13, 2000

I feel guilty because you're the real thing for me, but my mind always strays. Be with me for all time.

Nov. 25, 2000

I so need you in my life now, but where do I start? I am worse each day without you. Christmas is coming, but I am not any closer to you. I guess I can trade anyone in the world for you and for the uncertainty of being with you brings.

Dec. 14, 2000

It is your birthday and I am happy. I wish to be next to you and share your moment. But here I am, unimaginably far from you. So I just imagine that I am special to you.

Dec. 15, 2000

I simply want to be there with you. Share your cake, mingle with those who are close to you. But here I am, with you just in my mind. I shall shelter you in my mind.

Jan. 1, 2001

I'm writing you an hour after the clock struck 12. I just woke up 30 minutes earlier and had to fix myself. How were the fireworks? How was your new year? I kissed you on my wall. And you were smiling.

This new year I promise to love you even more, even if each day does not bring me any closer to you. The greatest fear I hold is to lose my faith in my capacity to love unrequited.

Jan. 20, 2001

We lost our president through people power. Big social turmoil for 3 or 4 days. A new woman-president has been inaugurated lunchtime. Rallies, rallies, rallies against a corrupt president, it had been very entertaining for me. And inspiring too. But amid all the confusion, this song—and only you—keep playing inside my head: "I Know Him By Heart" (Vonda Shepard).

Jan. 26, 2001

Dreams are strong. When I dream of someone in my sleep, and the dream is beautiful, I get more in love with that person in my dream.

Keavy, please don't hate me. My love is beautiful. I mean no harm.

Feb. 8-9, 2001

It's a full moon tonight and hours ago, it was unusually windy. I needed to hold someone. But even my imagination proved futile... All I had was myself and my messy hair.

Feb. 22, 2001

Anyone can reject me now and it won't matter. No one matters anymore but you.

March 10, 2001

How can someone pen the feelings that I have for you, and create the perfect melody to go with it? It makes me cry... and it's a good cry. *Mahal kita kasi.*

Aug. 18, 2001

I told him I love him now more than I love you, and that's true. I so love, Keavy, but I still love him more than you. You have always been a dream to me. And my love for this dream will never cease. It will just be here, I promise.

Love letters

By Jay Beltran

I FOUND an old photograph of someone from my past, and it had this note at the back of the picture:

"You sleep when you're
tired not when you
want to escape. There
are still many things
left unaccomplished.
If you leave I will
suffer, so will the
world..."

She gave this to me after my failed rendezvous with the Grim Reaper, after I took half a dozen Unisoms that didn't even get me to yawn...

And now I wonder how true these words were, along with all the letters and the cards that my seemingly consistent battles with the promise of forever and a day had gifted me with, and left me with nothing to hold on to but the lies and false hopes of eternity.

I've always said, "Don't say things you don't really mean." Don't make promises you can't keep...

No one ever listened.

You say you'll stay while you walk out the door. You tell me I'm the only one and tell him the same thing. You cover my eyes with lies of how beautiful the world is with you, only to find out that I'm alone again and my world has been covered in darkness.

I wonder if someday everything you write will soon fade out along with its meaning. Just like an ink stain on a white fabric, it goes out and fades with every wash.

Just like your love letters.

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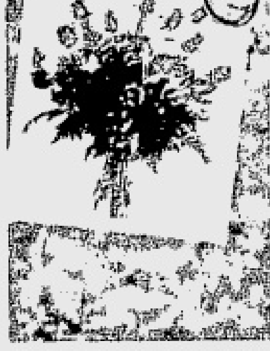

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Lie to me

By Dangerwuss

"I LOVE yous" are lies
Effective lies.
They work
e-ve-ry-time.
The line reached my ears
and I
dreamt of forever with him.
But I learned that forever can be so short.
But maybe I never did learn...
'cause now it's you I see
through rosy lens
And I'm
willing to believe in forever again
Wanting to hear from you
Waiting to be lied to.

Life Rx

from Dr. Ricardo Fernandez

Are you winning your own war against terrorism?

Inside your body, a war is always being waged against free radicals whose outcome may spell the difference between life and death! Free radicals are highly reactive forms of oxygen. When the body creates energy at the cellular level, oxygen is metabolized. When it loses one electron, it turns into a free radical. Free radicals attack the cells. They are like terrorists that hide within our bodies waiting for the opportunity to strike. Once they attack blood vessels, they become a main contributor to cardiovascular disease. When they shift their attention to our DNA, cancer becomes a big probability. According to estimates, free radicals hit the DNA in each cell about 10,000 times every day! Talk about World War III happening all the time.

It is a good thing there are antioxidants that protect our body from free radicals. Antioxidants serve as the defending army. They destroy free radicals by simply donating an electron to them. Do you know that the body creates its own army of antioxidants? CoQ10 is a natural antioxidant. It also serves as a catalyst in the production of energy by the cells and has the ability to slow down the oxidation process. The amount of CoQ10 in the body is sufficient until the age of 23. At that time, it slowly decreases in number due to environmental factors, lifestyle and the aging process.

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A war is raging right now as you read this article. Are you properly equipped?

This is for educational purposes only and is not meant to replace your doctor's advice. Ask your doctor for more information or you can call the AddLife Hotline at 920-1911

Dr. Ricardo O. Fernandez finished his Doctor of Medicine at the University of Sto. Tomas. He is a consultant at the Makati Medical Center and Associate Board Examiner of the Philippine Board of Otolaryngology.

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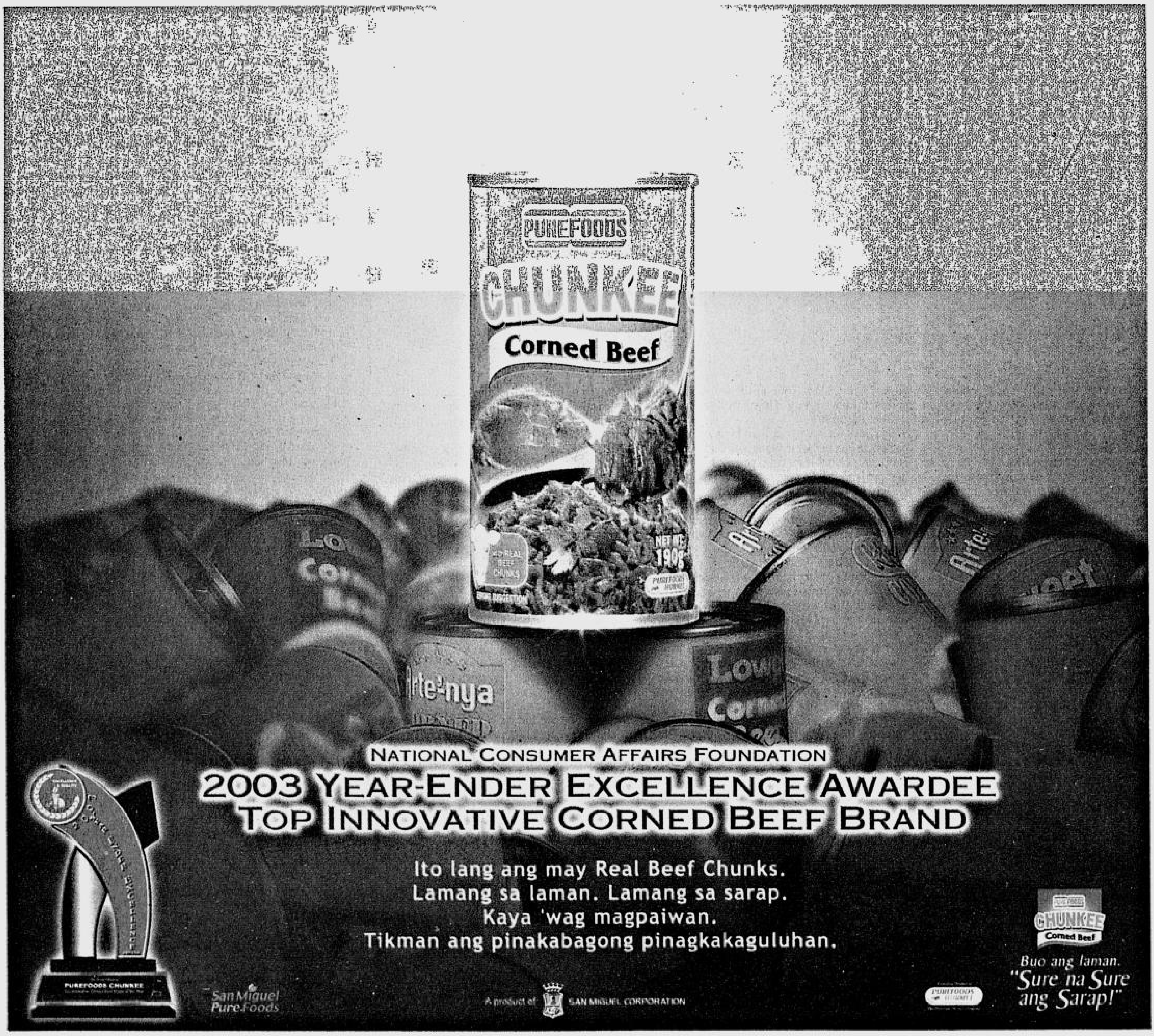
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Seeing red on Valentine's Day

By Jason Doplito
2bU! Correspondent

ON my TV, VH1 is playing the 96th greatest song from the past 25 years. On the coffee table is a magazine with Brent Javier on the cover. Right in front of me is my DVD copy of "My Sassy Girl."

It's red. As red as two lovers can get.

Valentine's Day is looming ahead and I'm starting to go crazy. I see pictures of couples in features and magazines and my eyes automatically roll over.

I just hate it. The way they flaunt their happiness, the way they flash their smiles, the way their arms circle around the other's shoulder. I hate the way they magnify my own loneliness like the palest of black being measured up against a universal black hole. It's weighing me down.

Like the anti-social guy that I am, I have drawn a contingency plan to dispel my eventual depression—starting Friday until Sunday morning. I'm going to lock myself up in my room at my parent's house, and read a book on the life of Sigmund Freud.

The more autobiographical the account, the less emotional I'd be, I suppose.

I'd stuff myself with popcorn; maybe slam the microwave door shut while my hand's still inside. I'll take comfort in Karen Kunawicz's words and drown myself in statistics: the number of times Ross has divorced, the length of Britney's marriage, the number of broken hearts being silly over the equally silly pseudo-holiday that is Valentine's.

I'll talk to my dog; she doesn't have much time left. I'll stare at her and I'd look into the eyes of one other creature that has never quite understood the meaning of romantic love.

Cheers to us whose love life sucks.

Sweet Lemon

By Bunny Anne Gapit
2bU! Correspondent

NO anesthesia works
For me
So I can only recognize
Authentic love.
The flaws I find,
Even them are perfect.
How do I win now this feat so
Biased?
Sebaceous…
Delicious…
My no-real heaven.
I can't sour grape
So I sweet lemon.

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The One

By Pauline Cruz

"Looks like we made it, look how far we've come my baby. We might have took the long way, we knew we'll get there someday. They said, I'll bet, they'll never make it. But just look at us going along... we're still together, still going strong."—**From Shania Twain's "Still the One"**

MY love story, at a glance, would seem so ordinary... the usual type that could happen to anyone. Here's the plot: young girl falls in love with a much older man to everybody's disbelief. In my case, a man 15 years older than I am. The young girl receives many criticisms and discouragement, but continues to love him.

I met Marco when I was a college sophomore in Negros Occidental. He caught my attention because of the obvious—he looked "old" to be a classmate. I never mistook him for a professor because he was wearing the prescribed school uniform as he entered the room. He was a new student and of course, everybody was curious about him. He seemed friendly, but for some reason, the two of us never shared the casual friendship that he seemed to share with everybody.

The first time we exchanged words was when he came to me and asked about some room arrangements. I told him what I knew and proceeded to do something else. We never seemed to interest one another.

We were seatmates in one of our classes, but we never got to talk much. All I knew about him was that he's Tagalog. He became popular in our college. It's not because of his age (though it may have contributed to the fact), but because of the way he dealt with others. Everybody said that he was gentle, kind and always willing to help. He became the official "kuya ng bayan" of the College of Education.

We might have been ignoring each other, but I got to observe him sometimes. He was always in a formal get-up (you know, Jose Rizal hairdo, polo, slacks and leather shoes). He never came to class unprepared. He had beautiful fingers. During the height of the cell phone craze, we exchanged numbers, but we still did not communicate. His number remained unnoticed in my phonebook and I never received any messages from him.

Surprise

The school year has just ended when I got the biggest surprise of the year. I received a text from him inviting me to the movies. I was quite intrigued. He was the last guy I expected to have a date with. I thought long and hard if I should go with him. I was nervous, excited and confused. I accepted.

It was on April 1, 2001 when that date took place. There was nothing special about it (after the movies, we ate lunch at the foodcourt), except that we totally had a grand time talking about ourselves. Our bond was unbelievable. It was really hard to believe how well we got along. We learned bits and pieces of facts about each other. We talked non-stop. As he walked me home, I knew that we'd have to be together again.

That date was the turning point of my life (his life as well). It was followed by countless lunches, trips to the movies, walks in the park and marathon phone calls. It created a wonderful friendship that both of us could not deny. Little by little, we got to know each other.

I learned why it was only then that he could finish college. A certain event in his life made him a prisoner of his past. I listened to his story and he listened to mine as well.

We became each other's best friend. Everyday, we would meet in school since we both took summer courses. We would do anything like stroll at the school park or just sit in a coffee shop and study together. At the end of our summer class, he was compelled to return to Manila. It was the first time that we got separated. But his absence made me realize one thing... I love him. I missed him terribly.

When everybody found out, they were skeptical if we could last. My friends would joke about how lucky I was to have Marco for he was not only a boyfriend, he could also be an uncle and a father to me and our future baby would not only have a father but a grandfather as well.

My parents asked me a million times over if I really loved this man. At first, they asked me to end the relationship. He's too old for you, they told me. I just listened to what they had to say, but I listened to what I felt too. I loved Marco very much to give up on him. I knew from the day I committed myself to him that he was the one I want to spend my life with. No one and nothing can change the way I feel.

Slowly, my family got to know Marco. He was always invited over our house until he became part of our household. My sister and brother would wonder where he was if he would be absent on the weekend. He shared beer nights with my pop and talks with my mama.

'Perfect'

In school, we became the "perfect pair." But no, they were wrong. Our relationship wasn't that perfect. We fought, got mad at each other. We were only perfect in sticking to our rule that we should resolve our trouble before midnight comes. Needless to say, we made peace on the day that we declared war.

The greatest test in our relationship was when Marco graduated a semester ahead of me and had to return to Manila. We suddenly found ourselves in a long-distance relationship. Bidding him goodbye was the hardest thing I had ever done. We both cried, but we struggled to keep our relationship going with every means we could afford—texts, phone calls, e-mails and letters.

On my graduation, he was able to collect enough resources to pay me a visit. It was one reunion I will always remember. It felt like coming home when I let myself drown in his embrace. It felt wonderful to be able to touch him, kiss him and hug him once again. I truly believe that on that day, no one could be happier than us.

Since we are geographically challenged, it was always our dream never to be separated again. Our prayer was answered when I was given the chance to pursue my master's degree in Manila. I took the opportunity even though I was bombarded with fears and anxiety about starting a new life in a new world. And so, here I am today, in this big city working my way to to reach my goal and at the same time, taking care of the relationship with Marco.

Two months to go and we will be marking the third year of our first date. Looking back, I take pride that we were able to surpass the obstacles in our relationship—academic pressure, long-distance situations, doubts, uncertainties and many more. We've been through so much, yet we are stronger than ever. Who would have thought that you two will go this far? a friend asked us. We just kept quiet. We both knew it from the start.

Some friendships are bound to remain as such, but when it takes a moving turn, you just have to sit back and watch what will happen. It might be good, it might be bad. But you'll never know until you take the risk and sacrifice your whole self.

Hoop dreams

By Des Arellano

"I wonder when
I'm on your mind,
Will your thoughts
Of me be kind?"

I FIRST saw him in one of those summer afternoons that are perfect for a tall glass of *halo-halo* and *liga* basketball. He was cruising around the neighborhood in a mountain bike, his floppy hair ruffled by the breeze.

When his *chinito* eyes met mine, he smiled, braces and all. That was when my heart began to melt into a pathetic, undignified mass.

Soon after, I began making every plausible excuse to get out of our house and hang around the park to see him.

Turned out he was in the neighborhood for the summer vacation, staying with his sisters in his grandparents' house a street away. A couple of visits, letters and evening walks later, something special had developed between us.

But the two months expectedly came to an end. And before I knew it, he was on his way home, soon after Agua de Mayo began.

The weekend visits and half-hearted exchange of letters that followed eventually faded, and he wound up in a special corner of my chest of memories.

That was eight summers ago. Tonight, as I take my evening walk along the dimly lit streets, I hear the pounding of a basketball dribbling on the court. I remember him once again. I smile and hope that he's doing just fine.

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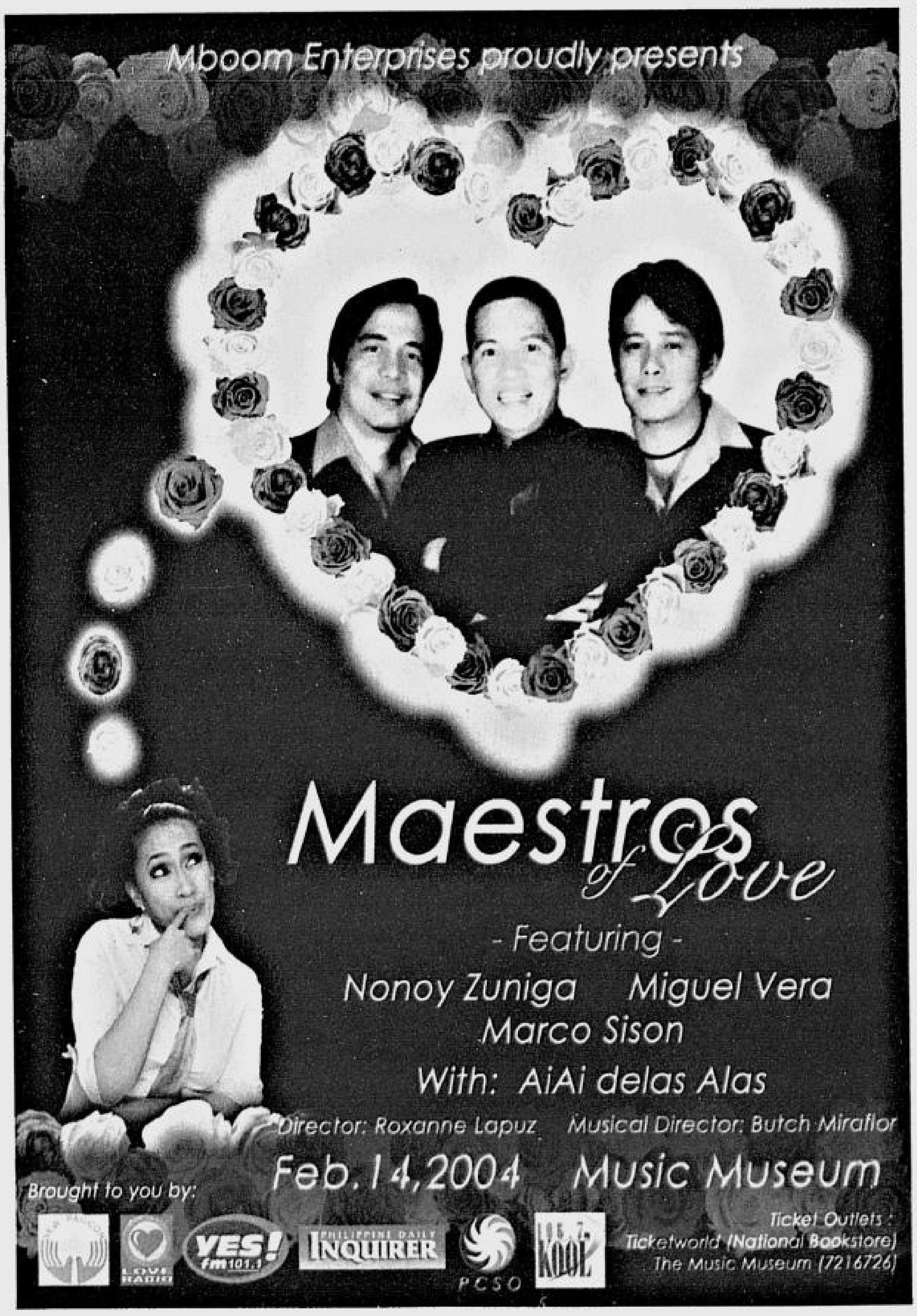
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1:30 a.m. in my bedroom

ANGEL Bes,

Hi, it's been a long time since we last talked. I can't say what I really want to tell you when I'm in front of you, so I wrote you *na lang*.

I'm in love with you. *Di ko alam kung kelan nagsimula basta* I just woke up one morning *na ikaw na ang nasa isipan ko*. I tried to fight this feeling because I was afraid it will destroy our budding friendship.

I will never forget the day you asked me about it. I had no choice but to tell you the truth. You said that I had to prove myself and our friendship would remain. I was so happy.

We constantly found new ways to liven up our boring day. There was even a time we sneaked out in the middle of the class and went to Gaisano to watch your favorite love team's movie even if it bored me to death, and then returned to school to catch a Theology exam.

Those were the happiest moments of my life. Believe me. But I soon realized you couldn't always have what you want. That all things do change. Remember the day you excitedly told me that you'd found your prince charming?

I thought you were just kidding, but when you started talking about his qualities, I knew you were serious. The giddiness in your voice and sparkle in your eyes were enough to erase the doubts in me. In your excitement you forgot how would I feel. Maybe I'm just a good actor, because you failed to notice that behind my smiling face, I was hurting inside. And when you realized it and said you were sorry, I told you it's okay, that your happiness is mine too.

I couldn't blame you for falling in love with him. He's intelligent, good-looking and he has a car. I didn't say a word when you started spending more time with him. I was there to listen to your stories at the end of the day.

I asked myself why you chose him instead of me. The realization hit me hard. I figured out that I couldn't match him in any way.

He gave you an expensive ring, I just made you a bracelet from strings. You dined in a restaurant, we just ate at the school canteen. He promised to treat you to Enchanted Kingdom or Star City, but all I could promise you was a walk in the park. You see, I'm nothing compared to him.

And it's not very surprising that you fell into each other's arms. You have so many things in common *naman talaga e*. You're both ambitious, full of zest for life and you have a clear goal for your future.

I'm just a simple guy who wants simple things, who is content with simple living.

Bes, I did my best, I assure you that. But my best wasn't good enough to win your heart.

I felt miserable, depressed, insecure and lonely. Seeing you everyday was a battle for me. I smiled and laughed all day, but I cried at night. And in the process, I was forced to lock my heart and guard it fiercely. I promised to myself that it will never bleed again.

Now after a long time, I've found the courage to venture outside again and have a new start. But I realized I lost my key outside.

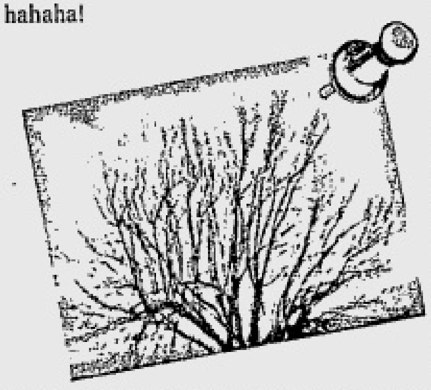
Now I'm just waiting for someone. For that special someone who can find my lost key and who can open my heart and set me free, who can show me how wonderful it is to smile again, to share again, to love again.

I know after a short while we'll find a way to patch things up. After all, we're still friends and you're still my angel, *di ba*? I know it's only a test for us and just as you said, we will laugh at this when time comes. Right, Bes?

Good luck my Angel, wish you all the best, especially in your love life. Don't worry 'bout me. I'm okay.

Still here, like always,
Angel Pao

P.S. Forgot to tell you *ang baduy ng suot mo nung* Xmas party. As in... ewww! hahaha!



'Andrea in Wonderland': an ex-groupie's blog entries

By Andrea C. Perez

Meow

JAN. 17?
here?
Saturday?

Kitten's Den (kit'ns den) n.—*1. a seedy pseudo-canteen found in 1975 in an equally seedy street on Manila where the lights are bright and people could drink to their heart's and tummy's content. 2. a beer joint at the back of Maria de Leon Bus Station tended by "manang," where people (i.e. bums, bus drivers, artists, writers, students, academicians, etc.) would go to especially if they're on a very limited budget. 3. also known as Batcave, Tia Maria de Leon*

It was nice to be back in Kitten's Den. I don't know for how long we would be returning to that nook we, at one time, treated as home.

Three of the "drinking buddhas" had a convention at Kitten's to resolve geek-god's issues: Should she resign from her job where she feels useless? Is she supposed to get hooked with that guy? She's a Daria knock-off, and a relationship may be a little icky for her.

Bitterpaulie (gay dad) and I (ex_groupie mum) played doting shrink parents to her. After several rounds of beer and narcissistic snapshots on our phone cameras, I think we got her more confused.

But bitterpaulie and I had the same stand: that she leave her job upon an assurance of a better one; and flirt with that guy, recognizing that she must be over puberty by 22.

Kitten's is a not-so-usual fixture for not-so-usual people where talks range from the most trivial nothing to arts, writing, politics, sex; where emotions are measured in empty bottles and relationships are forged over damp tables; where people discover the various stages of drunk and swear never to drink again, only to return after a week; where the smell of smoke, beer bubbles and over-ripe desire is preserved in the hot air.

Definitely no room for weak stomachs here. We enjoy life and the grime that goes with it. It is our refuge, our third-world hideaway.

ex_groupie in elysium

Jan. 26
On a jealous spiel
Monday/Mad day

It was something that was supposed to be nothing, but for a while It was everything and It made me want to just lie there on the bed thinking, rationalizing and swapping the supposed-to-bes for the delightfully wicked I-don't-cares and words on that small screen were all It took to dismiss force-fed dogma the nuns and priests and educators shoved up my impressionable little-girl mind and the Elysian Fields opened with every beep beep, bleep bleep of that machine of concentrated sin but when It looked at me, oh god, It was as ugly as an unwashed knee who kissed the ground too often, but still It maintained that charm and then wham!, It walked away with everything—the accumulated somethings—that was supposed be nothing, closing the Fields with a faint beep beep, bleep bleep.

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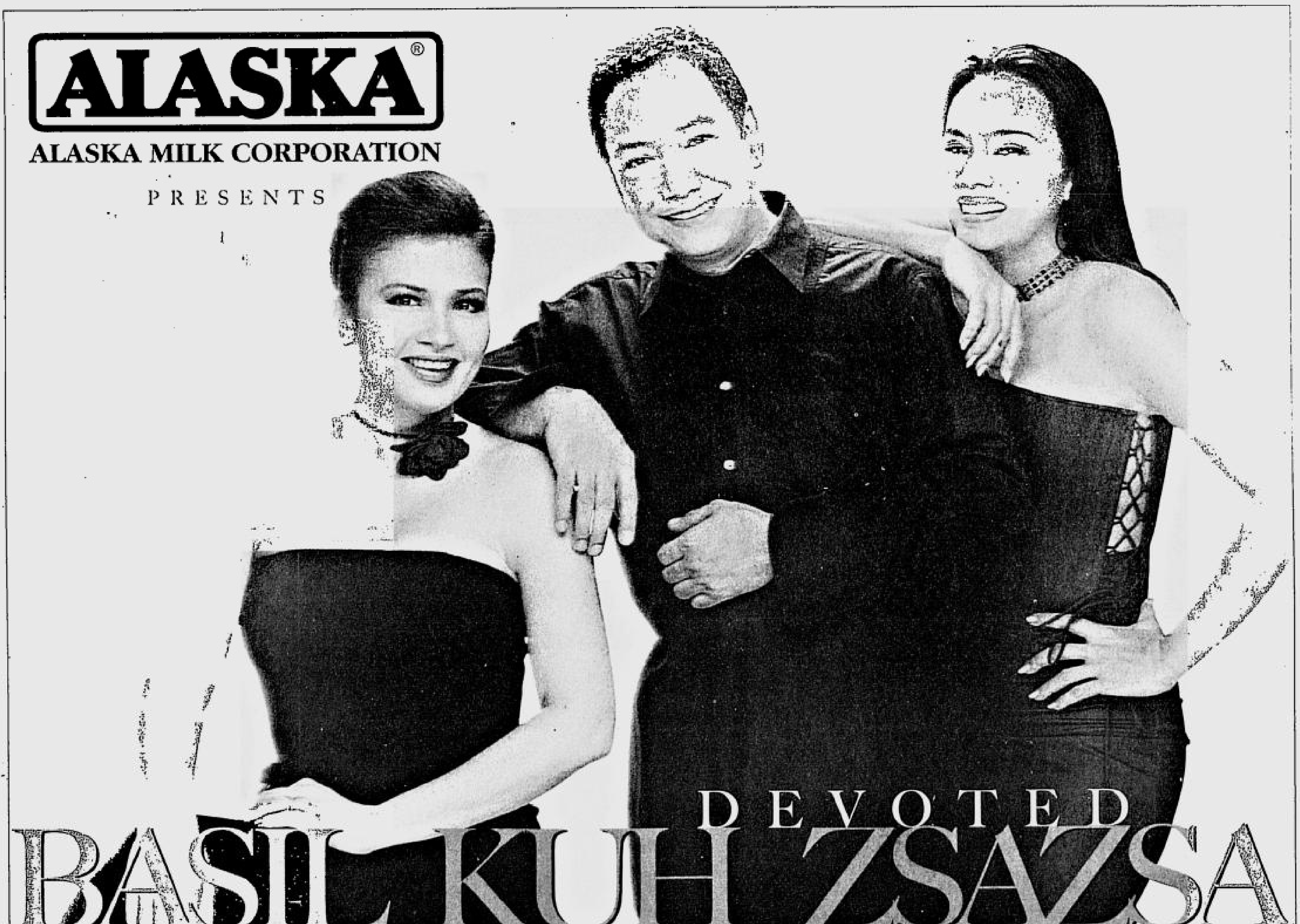

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Five things I love about the driving queens

By Patricia E. S. Dimaano

MY Tuesdays are spent with my best buds, Kaich, Mace and Naf. For a foursome who only met and started hanging out in college, we have gone to almost all the restaurants in Katipunan, shared a thousand and one cakes in Chocolate Kiss in UP, and once in a while feast on tuna and crackers when the fat ones are on a diet. And who could ever top that melodramatic runaway which lasted 24 hours?

I have found solace and joy in the company of my friends and here are five more things why I just love them so.

1. Each driving queen is a unique, one-of-a-kind find. Kaich is a world-class artist with naturally curly copper hair. She has wowed audiences here and abroad with her singing and dancing.

Mace is the sweetest girl who bakes the best cookies. She moves with such grace it's amazing to watch her groove to hip hop during concerts.

Naf, on the other hand is the quirky one. She knows all the latest show biz buzz and bumps into *artistas* in the strangest places.

I would like to think I'm the average one, just a bit too silly and wacky.

2. Eat, drink and be merry! Evidently, that is our motto. We meet up all the time to try out a new dish, a new dessert and a new restaurant. We make plans. We secretly ache when a restaurant in Katipunan (where, for sure, we spent a loud time) closes, and delight at the thought of a new one opening soon.

Friendships can't run deep without alcohol. I always stock up on beer and/or vodka just in case my friends crash my house.

3. They are driven, motivated. achievers who make me want to do better myself.

All three friends are graduating cum laude—actually, still working on being magna. Apart from that, everyone is excelling in her non-academic work.

Kaich just came from a tour in Europe and the States where she performed.

Macy develops websites and writes for online magazines.

"The Naf" as we so fondly call her, is taking up law next year and will definitely be one helluva lawyer. Everyone is just 21.

4. My driving queens are the Care Bears, the Rugrats and the Muppets all rolled into one. In a span of less than three years, I have seen the most animation, heard the weirdest sound effects and listened to the most bizarre stories in the planet.

They are a sweet bunch and a dose of them can do wonders for your day.

I can be "squatter," *jologs* or *barok* when I'm with them and not care about a thing.

5. They are the people I love the most. They are my friends, my support system and the only people who will believe that I was a princess in Egypt in my past life.

The author is not sure where the name "driving queen" originated or who came up with the term. All four girls drive, and that's about it.

Heart on fire

By Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent

"I'm in love, and always will be."—Dido, "White Flag"

I HAVE never been in love. Or at least, I used to think so. I thought that being in love meant that feeling that made you want to get up every morning and sing at the top of your lungs.

Or the proverbial butterflies flitting like mad at the pit of your stomach. Or that tingly sensation that spread a shower of warmth all the way down to your toes.

Like every other person on the planet, I was locked in that mindset and thought I could only be in love with a "special someone" who made me feel all this and more. But, as I grew up, I realized there was more to that "feeling" than what everybody thought.

Being in love can be flexible. It doesn't have to be exclusively romantic. Love can come in all forms, even those we can't begin to understand. It's not just about happily-ever-afters and fireworks. The pain, rejection, despair and disappointments are very much a part of it. They actually make being in love so real and special.

Some of us might have spent lifetimes tilting at windmills and chasing rainbows, searching for the greatest romance ever known to people, when it is the seemingly little things around us that evoke that special feeling.

Maybe there won't be butterflies, or tingles, or that *kilig* feeling all the time, but you know from the soul, flesh and core of your being that it is something inexplicably wonderful and extraordinary. And you feel incredibly glad that you're alive.

Twenty-one years of my life have passed, but it is only now that I have the courage to admit to myself how truly "in love" I am and always have been. I am in love with my family, though I may not be very expressive at times. I am in love with my friends old, new, lost or forgotten. I am in love with my special someone out there, whether he is a part of my past or the once-in-a-lifetime yet to come. I am in love with the faces I see everyday, with the smiles that prove that life is worth living.

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At the risk of inciting Philosophy teachers to war, I believe Descartes was wrong. I am not because I think. I am because I love... and I can be even more, because I am loved in return.

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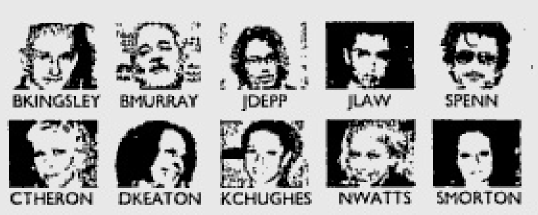

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Five things I love about the driving queens

By Patricia E. S. Dimaano

MY Tuesdays are spent with my best buds, Kaich, Mace and Naf. For a foursome who only met and started hanging out in college, we have gone to almost all the restaurants in Katipunan, shared a thousand and one cakes in Chocolate Kiss in UP, and once in a while feast on tuna and crackers when the fat ones are on a diet. And who could ever top that melodramatic runaway which lasted 24 hours?

I have found solace and joy in the company of my friends and here are five more things why I just love them so.

1. Each driving queen is a unique, one-of-a-kind find. Kaich is a world-class artist with naturally curly copper hair. She has wowed audiences here and abroad with her singing and dancing.

Mace is the sweetest girl who bakes the best cookies. She moves with such grace it's amazing to watch her groove to hip hop during concerts.

Naf, on the other hand is the quirky one. She knows all the latest show biz buzz and bumps into *artistas* in the strangest places.

I would like to think I'm the average one, just a bit too silly and wacky.

2. Eat, drink and be merry! Evidently, that is our motto. We meet up all the time to try out a new dish, a new dessert and a new restaurant. We make plans. We secretly ache when a restaurant in Katipunan (where, for sure, we spent a loud time) closes, and delight at the thought of a new one opening soon.

Friendships can't run deep without alcohol. I always stock up on beer and/or vodka just in case my friends crash my house.

3. They are driven, motivated achievers who make me want to do better myself.

All three friends are graduating cum laude—actually, still working on being magna. Apart from that, everyone is excelling in her non-academic work.

Kaich just came from a tour in Europe and the States where she performed.

Macy develops websites and writes for online magazines.

"The Naf" as we so fondly call her, is taking up law next year and will definitely be one helluva lawyer. Everyone is just 21.

4. My driving queens are the Care Bears, the Rugrats and the Muppets all rolled into one. In a span of less than three years, I have seen the most animation, heard the weirdest sound effects and listened to the most bizarre stories in the planet.

They are a sweet bunch and a dose of them can do wonders for your day.

I can be "squatter," *jologs* or *barok* when I'm with them and not care about a thing.

5. They are the people I love the most. They are my friends, my support system and the only people who will believe that I was a princess in Egypt in my past life.

The author is not sure where the name "driving queen" originated or who came up with the term. All four girls drive, and that's about it.

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Heart on fire

By Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent

"I'm in love, and always will be."—Dido, "White Flag"

I HAVE never been in love. Or at least, I used to think so. I thought that being in love meant that feeling that made you want to get up every morning and sing at the top of your lungs.

Or the proverbial butterflies flitting like mad at the pit of your stomach. Or that tingly sensation that spread a shower of warmth all the way down to your toes.

Like every other person on the planet, I was locked in that mindset and thought I could only be in love with a "special someone" who made me feel all this and more. But, as I grew up, I realized there was more to that "feeling" than what everybody thought.

Being in love can be flexible. It doesn't have to be exclusively romantic. Love can come in all forms, even those we can't begin to understand. It's not just about happily-ever-afters and fireworks. The pain, rejection, despair and disappointments are very much a part of it. They actually make being in love so real and special.

Some of us might have spent lifetimes tilting at windmills and chasing rainbows, searching for the greatest romance ever known to people, when it is the seemingly little things around us that evoke that special feeling.

Maybe there won't be butterflies, or tingles, or that *kilig* feeling all the time, but you know from the soul, flesh and core of your being that it is something inexplicably wonderful and extraordinary. And you feel incredibly glad that you're alive.

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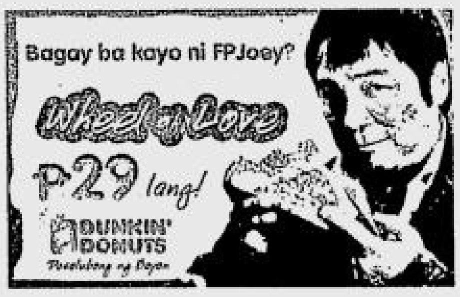
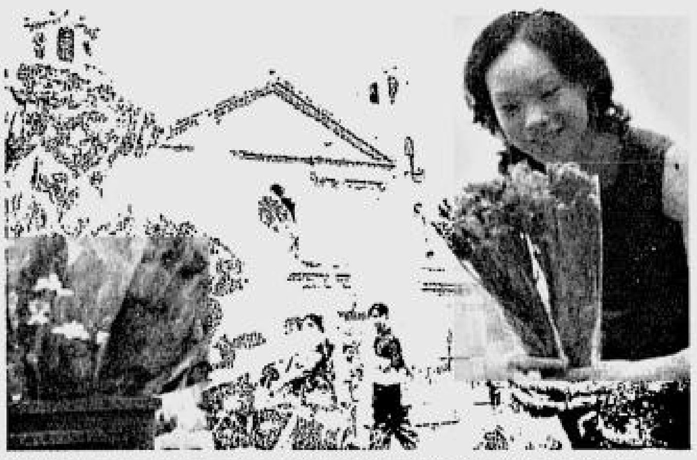

Bagay ba kayo ni FPJoey?
Wheel of Love
P29 lang!
DUNKIN' DONUTS
Pasalubong ng Bayan

In the [illegible] for MANILA

AT JONES BRIDGE: The modern Filipina, single and happy. Tippi Ocampo stylized *terno* in denim and white fiber midriff with flower accent, matching denim with flower cut-out skirt with white fiber lining; Get Happy hammershell flower embossed trio with diamante center earrings



EVEN if you're buying flowers for yourself, they're still beautiful. Rosanna Ocampo olive stretch top with ribbon drawstring waist and tulle panel detail; Paolo Raymundo V-slashed suede skirt; Get Happy abalone on wood rectangle with chain dangle earrings; Julia's leather knot sandals

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The proud and historic city is slowly but surely regaining its former glory

"THIS Manileño looks familiar..." Kate Torralba ruffled asymmetrical dress; Firma fuchsia chalcedony and Swarovski chandelier earrings

Text by Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Chris Costello

IN THE PAST, when technology was not as accessible and the word "mall" was not in the dictionary, the venue for romancing the sweethearts was old Manila.

The nostalgic beauty of a city rich with architecture and teeming with history was enough to send lovers to another world. Not only was the city available every day, it was literally free. It was not—and still is not—uncommon to find young and elderly couples on benches, looking as though the world was only theirs to savor.

Thanks to the projects of Mayor Lito Atienza, Manila is slowly but surely regaining its former glory. Now adorning the city are colorful lights that seem to heighten the beauty of a starlit sky. Lining the bay are inexpensive restaurants that serve good food for those waiting for the postcard-worthy Manila Bay sunset.

Beautiful parks and fountains give lovers a moment's respite from the real world. In spite of the mall-ification of the country, quaint old-world nuances such as the *kalesa* are still there, reminding us of who we are and where we came from.

"My favorite spot? I would consider it this bay," says the Mayor. "That's the very reason why we developed this and gave it this new colorful life. I grew up in this area. I was a young boy growing up in Malate and we used to swim in this bay [which] was always a joyful place for the children of my generation."

E-mail the author at cathy_young1@yahoo.com

More photos on page F2

BRIGHT lights, reborn city

SPECIAL THANKS TO BOJO STA.MARIA AND ARMAND SEBASTIAN
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR, CITY OF MANILA;
BAYWALK PATROL; TAMMY DAVID, RENE JOSE, J.A. TADENA
STYLING: HAPPY DAVID (0917-8106274)
MODELS: MARGA GARCIA, MAYOR LITO ATIENZA
HAIR AND MAKEUP: REMY BERMUDEZ,
SPECIAL THANKS TO FIX SALON, ROBINSONS PLACE ERMITA
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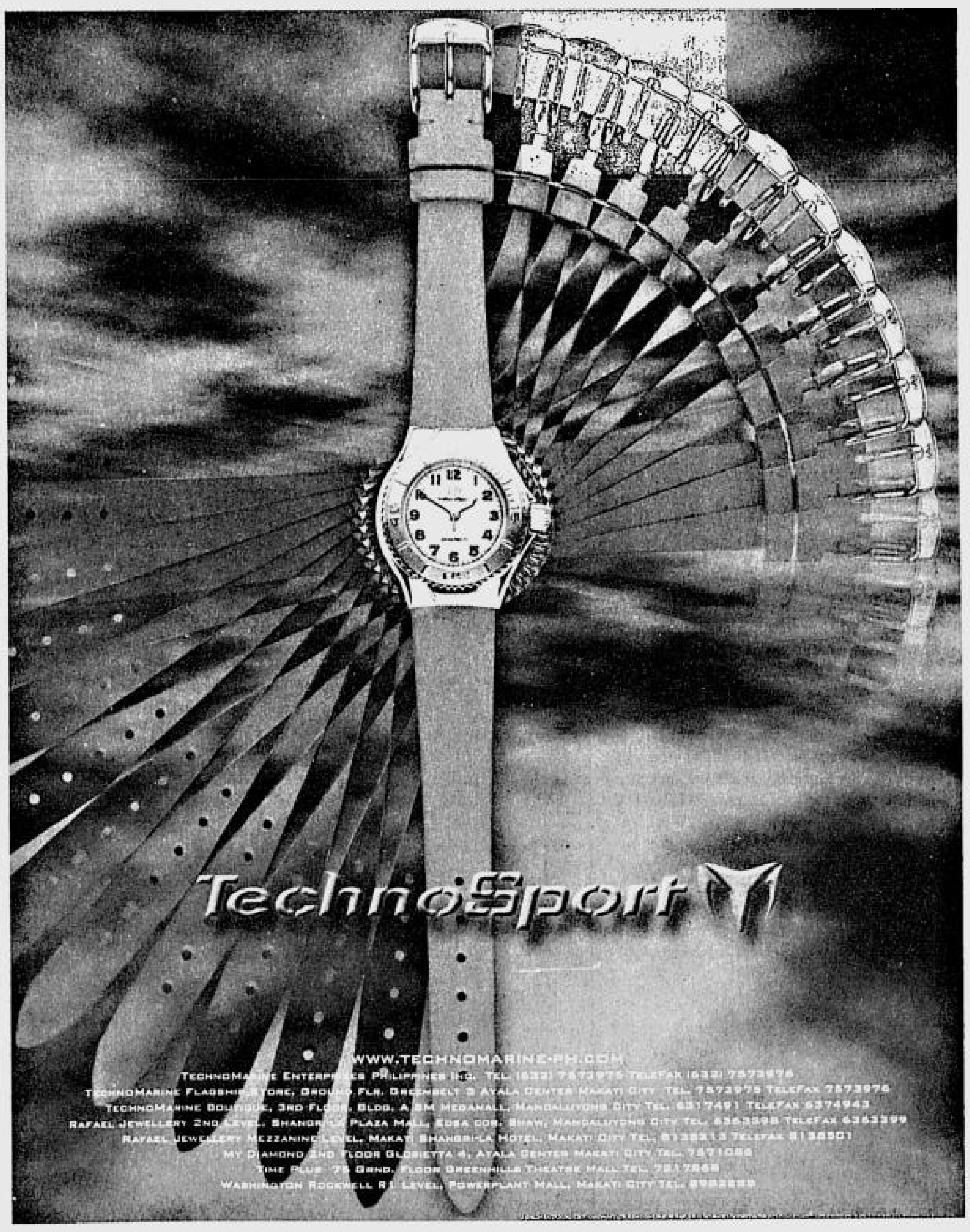
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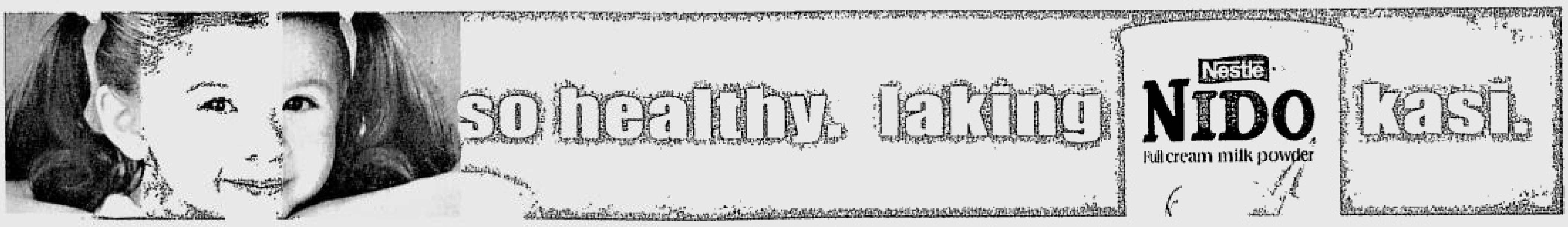
so healthy. laking Nestlé NIDO kasi.
Full cream milk powder

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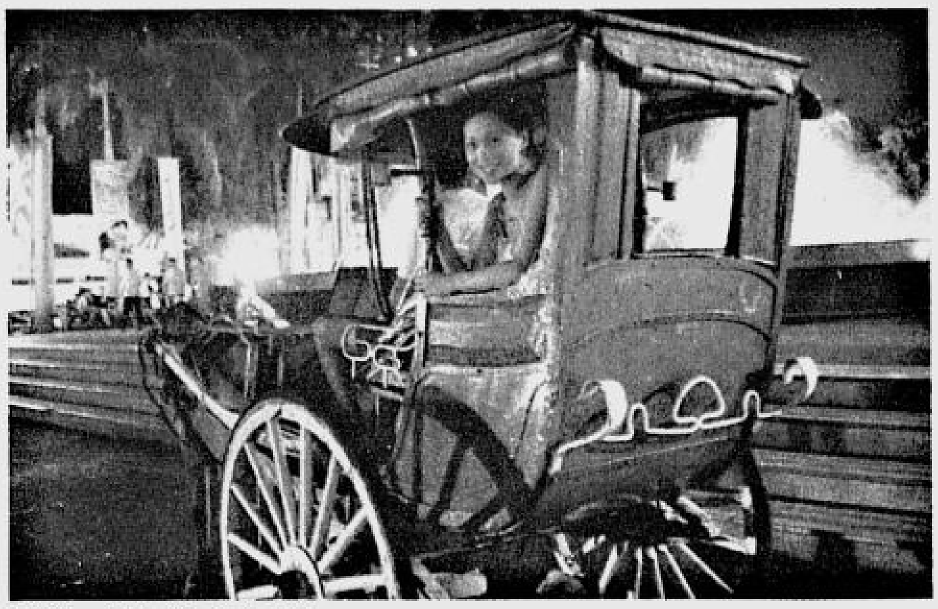
In the mood for MANILA

A GLAM moment in Rajah Sulayman Park. Tippi Ocampo stretch tube dress with ribbon halter and flower detail; Firma Swarovski wired earrings; Janilyn nude stilettos



CAP the night with a *kalesa* ride.

Rave Reviews for the new Philips Pixel Plus Plasma TV

PHILIPS CONSUMER Electronics, Europe's largest consumer electronics company, once again tops its record with the much-lauded performance of its Pixel Plus Plasma Flat TV.

This award-winning TV received rave reviews from leading industry publications across the globe. Home Cinema Choice has given the Philips Pixel Plus Plasma Flat TV the "Best Buy" Guarantee, with its capability to enhance even the smallest details, enhancing even computer-generated images. "Colors are ebullient and tightly contained by solid, sharp edges…there's fantastic depth and definition; images are so real, they are almost tangible."

What Home Cinema also raves about the features of Philips Pixel Plus Plasma Flat TV, including Active Control, which "continually adjusts all manner of picture facets to keep the final results looking as good as possible." The magazine praises the "amount of fine detail, which is phenomenal."

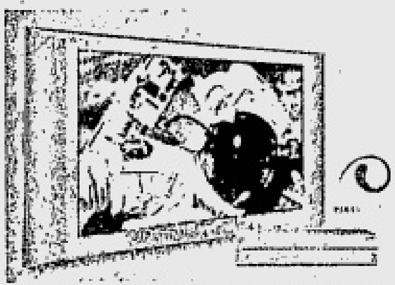
For What Video magazine, the Philips Pixel Plus Plasma Flat TV is the "Best Buy" because of the Movie Plus feature, "which virtually eliminates fast-movement-related shimmer." The TV's audio system also makes this set tops with this magazine. "The audio talent complements its stunning picture. The speakers are unusually sensitive, providing extreme clarity and an impressive frequency range."

This latest innovation from Philips recently received recognition as European Plasma TV of the Year 2003-2004 from the European Imaging and Sound Association (EISA), one of the most prestigious award giving bodies in the industry. EISA is the largest editorial multimedia organization in Europe, with a membership of 50 audio, mobile electronics, video and photography magazines drawn from 20 European countries.

Philips has definitely raised the bar with the Pixel Plus Plasma Flat TV. This set not only has a stylish design, it is also equipped with the award-winning Pixel Plus technology which delivers increased resolution with world-record breaking 2 million pixels per picture frame. Included in its list of spectacular features are Luminance Transient Improvement which sharpens each pixel, enhancing over-all detail for cleaner and natural picture with more depth than ever; Digital Natural Motion which eliminates motion judder, perfect for sports and action movies; and Color Processing technology that combines four different color enhancements for more vivid and lifelike colors, great for nature or travel shows.

This TV also has Active Control which automatically optimizes picture performance to give the best possible picture all the time. The Virtual Dolby Surround creates the ambience of the cinema, and because this TV is HDTV-ready, the Pixel Plus Plasma Flat TV is capable of receiving digital signals. It also improves the image quality of video games, DVD, even ordinary TV signals.

With such high recognition and rave reviews, the Philip Pixel Plus Plasma Flat TV is definitely the set for home entertainment at its best.



THE NEW Philips Pixel Plus Plasma Flat TV.

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Editor's Choice

HOME CINEMA BEST BUY

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PHILIPS

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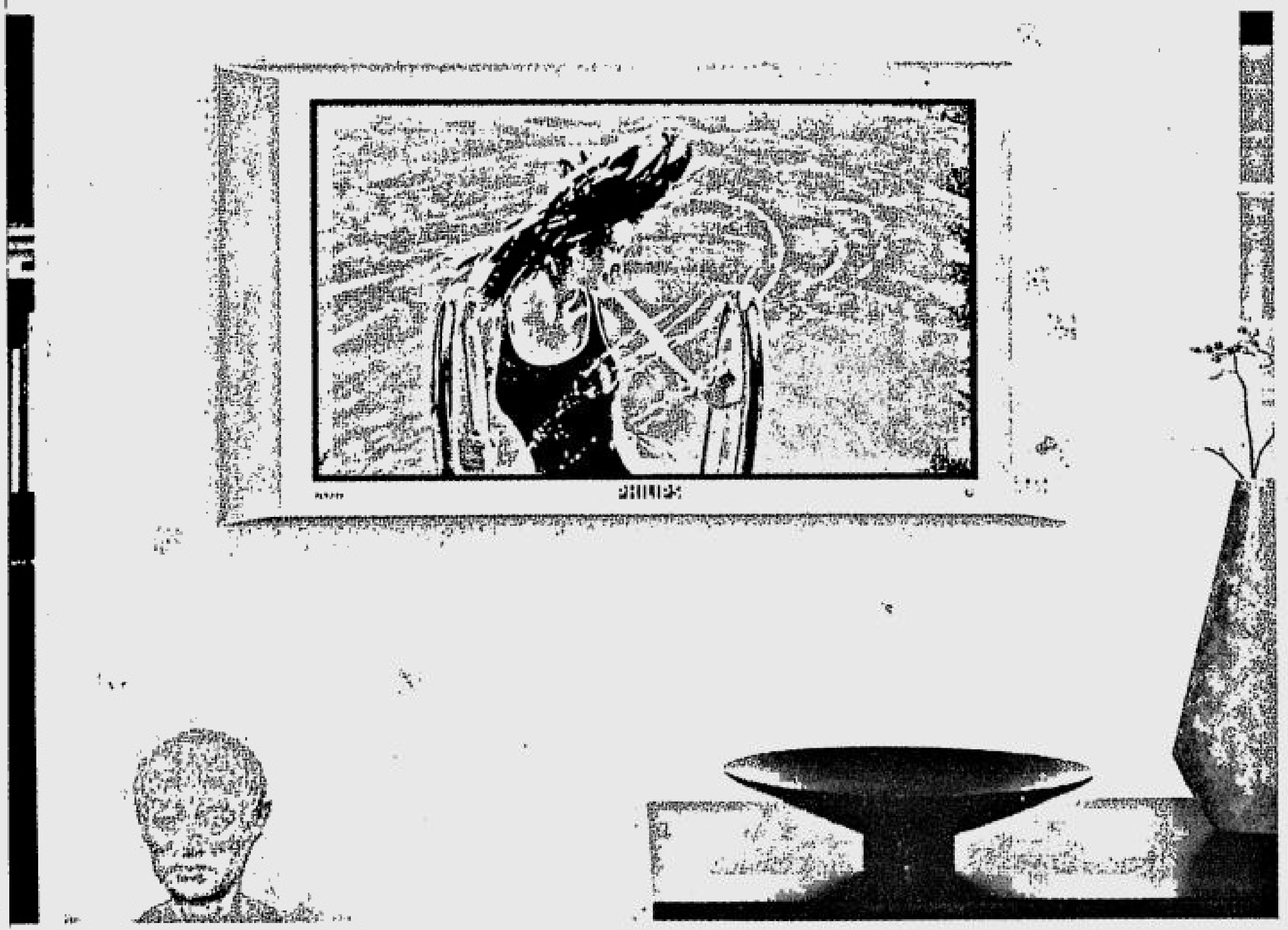
"I'm sorry, I've got some details to attend to."



You'll find any excuse to stay home with the new Philips Pixel Plus Plasma TV. One look at the Philips Pixel Plus Plasma TV and you'll see much more than a sleek design. By dramatically increasing the number of pixels, our award-winning picture processor dramatically improves the picture quality for an astonishing level of detail, depth and clarity.

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Staying home has never been better.

PIXEL PLUS

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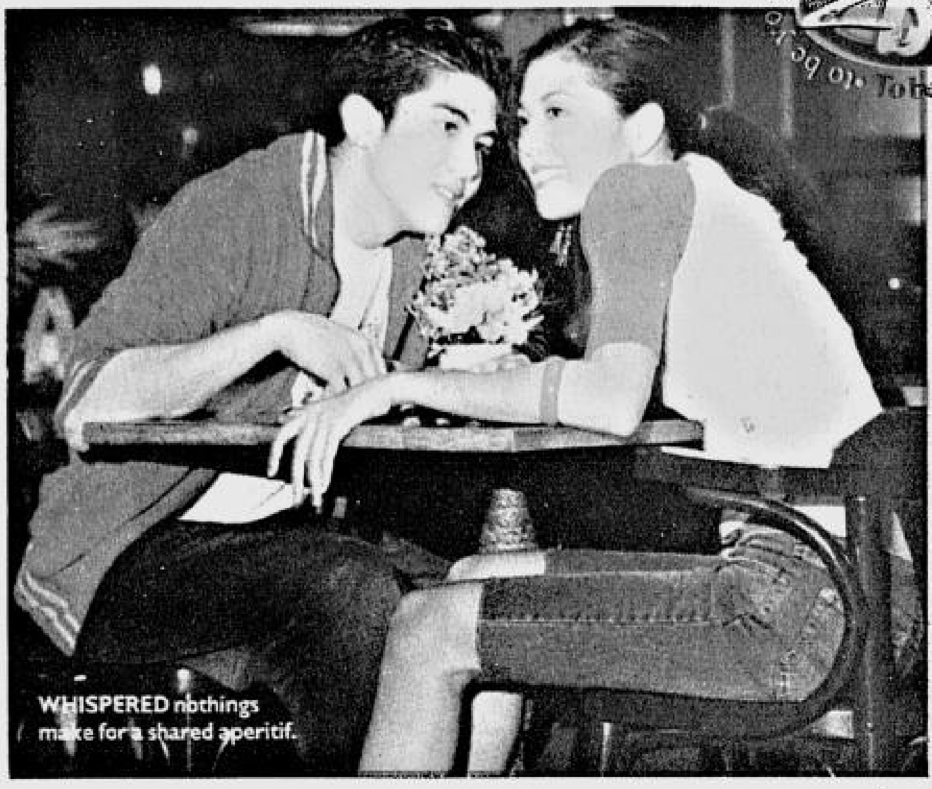
Treat for twos

From page F4

Ala Paredes
20

What's keeping you busy?
School, boyfriend, Internet addiction
Love is... like oxygen! All we need is love!
Where will you be and who would you be with on Valentine's Day?
Hopefully with my guy. I don't care if we spend it on a sofa, watching DVDs and eating chocolates.


WHISPERED nothings make for a shared aperitif.

ALA PAREDES' CLOTHES: PENSHOPPE
LUIS MANZANO'S CLOTHES: HUMAN
MAKEUP: BO VICENCIO
HAIR: EDWARD CATAMURA
PHOTOGRAPHER: ROMY HOMILLADA
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FOUNTAIN AREA AT THE 2/L GREENBELT 3,
AYALA CENTER
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OFFSCREEN ROMANCE. Luis and Ala at the movies

Tell us about...
Your favorite Valentine memory:
I threw a singles' garden party. All girls, chocolate fondue, *banigs*, candlelight and wine. It's the only time I've ever celebrated Valentine's Day.
The best Valentine's gift you've received:
I've never gotten anything on Valentine's Day (hint, hint!).
The best Valentine's gift you've given:
I'm always single on Valentine's Day so I end up giving my girlfriends stuff.
The most romantic place you've been to:
Any beautiful beach I've ever been to... and Paris. I loved all those art museums. I'd love for a guy to take me on an art museum date.
Your ideal partner:
Someone who looks like Johnny Depp or Gael Garcia Bernal... *na marunong magluto, magmasahe at kumanta*. Hehehe.
Your ideal romantic evening:
I love the beach! I'd love to go on an evening walk barefoot. I like places where we can talk. Sounds cliché but it's true.
Your most memorable kiss:
Guess we'll all remember our very first kiss.
Your worst heartbreak:
My worst heartbreak was my first love... and hopefully it'll be the last heartbreak.
How far would you go for love?
If I think I can spend my life with someone, then I think I'd go pretty far for him.
Choose:
Red or black? Red.
Flowers or chocolates? Chocolates.
Hugs or kisses? Both! Lots of them.
Dumper or dumpee? So far, I've never been the dumpee.
Watching the sunset at the beach or a candlelit dinner for two? Beach, anytime!
Would you rather ask someone out or be asked out? I've never asked anyone out. Maybe I'll have the guts to someday.
Would you kiss on a first date? No.
Do you believe in soulmates? No.
Do you believe in love at first sight? No.
Would you call yourself romantic? Yes.

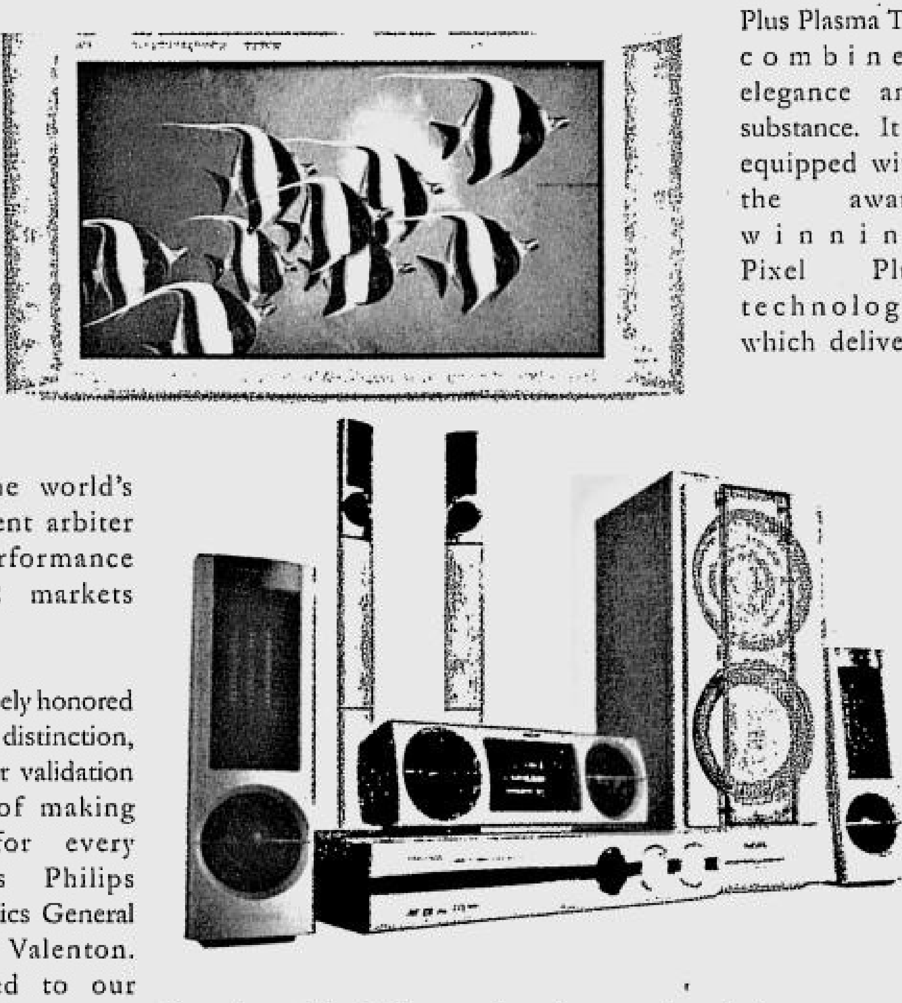
Philips awarded Superbrand!

(From Left) Superbrands Aia Pres. Peter Jeffrey; DTI Asst. Sec. for Consumer Welfare and Trade Regulations Group J. Norman dela Rama Jocson; and PCE Gen. Mgr. Angelo Valenton

Philips, one of the world's biggest electronics companies and Europe's largest, enjoys an enviable reputation as a pioneer in innovations and inventions. Recently, the Dutch electronics giant added another feather to its cap when it was hailed as a superbrand after being included in the Superbrand list for the year 2004 in the Philippine market.

Founded in England in 1991, Superbrand is the world's leading independent arbiter of brand performance operating in 32 markets worldwide.

"We feel extremely honored and proud for this distinction, which is yet another validation of Philips' goal of making things better for every consumer," says Philips Consumer Electronics General Manager Angelo Valenton. "We are indebted to our consumers and trade partners who continue to patronize and support our products. This is one of many motivations that inspire us to come up with innovative products and services that improve people's lives," adds Valenton.



Philips was nominated as a "Superbrand" by the Philippine Superbrand Council that comprises of luminaries in the media and communications industry in the Philippines. The strict criteria of selection of a Superbrand includes market dominance, customer loyalty, goodwill, longevity and market acceptance.

Among the innovative products that make Philips such a popular brand are the Philips Pixel Plus Plasma TV and the LX8000SA Home Theater System, both of which provide cinema-style viewing for a unique "Best Seat in the House" experience.

The Pixel Plus Plasma TV combines elegance and substance. It is equipped with the award winning Pixel Plus technology, which delivers increased resolution at a record-breaking two million pixels per picture frame. Paired with the LX8000SA Home Theater world System that gives total immersion in movies and music, Philips truly gives you plenty of great excuses to stay home.

These are merely some of the remarkable products that were borne out of Philips' rich legacy of innovations and inventions—a legacy that enables Philips to always be at the forefront of several remarkable milestones.

For instance, Philips invented the compact audiocassette tape and set a global standard for tape recording that has never been altered since. Other key breakthroughs came in the processing, storage and transmission of images, sound and data, which resulted in the invention of the Laser Vision optical disc, the Compact Disc and the Digital Versatile Disc.

Philips is also active in the development of the Blu-ray Disc, the next generation optical disc format that delivers the highest data rate of any consumer media and the highest recording density.

Built on a bedrock of invention and innovation, Philips today holds close to 100,000 of the world's patents in inventions and this figure is growing, thanks to research, which has always been Philips' core strength.

With such noteworthy inventions and innovations, the recognition of Philips as a Superbrand comes as no surprise. Being included in the Superbrands list surely corroborates Philips' goal of making things better for consumers.

Young publisher off to England

THE BRITISH Council will send Ani Rosa Almario of Adarna House as the Philippine candidate to the search for International Young Publisher of the Year, which will culminate in glittering ceremonies during the London Book Fair with Cherie Blair as guest of honor.

Almario, 26, was literally "born" into the publishing world and was reared by her father, National Artist Virgilio Almario, who publishes children's literature.

Almario will visit the United Kingdom from Feb. 29-March 17. She will undertake an educational tour of Scotland, Wales, and other regional publishing centers.

At the London Book Fair, Almario will give a presentation before the judging panel on issues such as translation/international rights, the book as a brand, developing readership, and writing for contemporary audiences.

Almario will give a local dry run of her presentation on Feb. 17, 10:30 a.m., at the British Council's Knowledge and Learning Center, located at the 10/F, Taipan Place, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 9141011 to 14.

Sta. Clara Parish School reunion

THE SANTA Clara Parish School, the only exclusive Catholic school for boys in Pasay City, will hold its 2004 Grand Alumni Homecoming on Feb. 28 at 1 p.m. on the campus grounds. All graduates from 1968 to 2003 are invited.

Call Prof. Adrian C. Jarder (0918-7140739), Mr. Eduardo Salamera (0920-2856646) , and Ms Christine Joy Robledo (0920-2461007). Also call 831-8253 or e-mail scps_pasay@yahoo.com. Registration will be on the day of the reunion.

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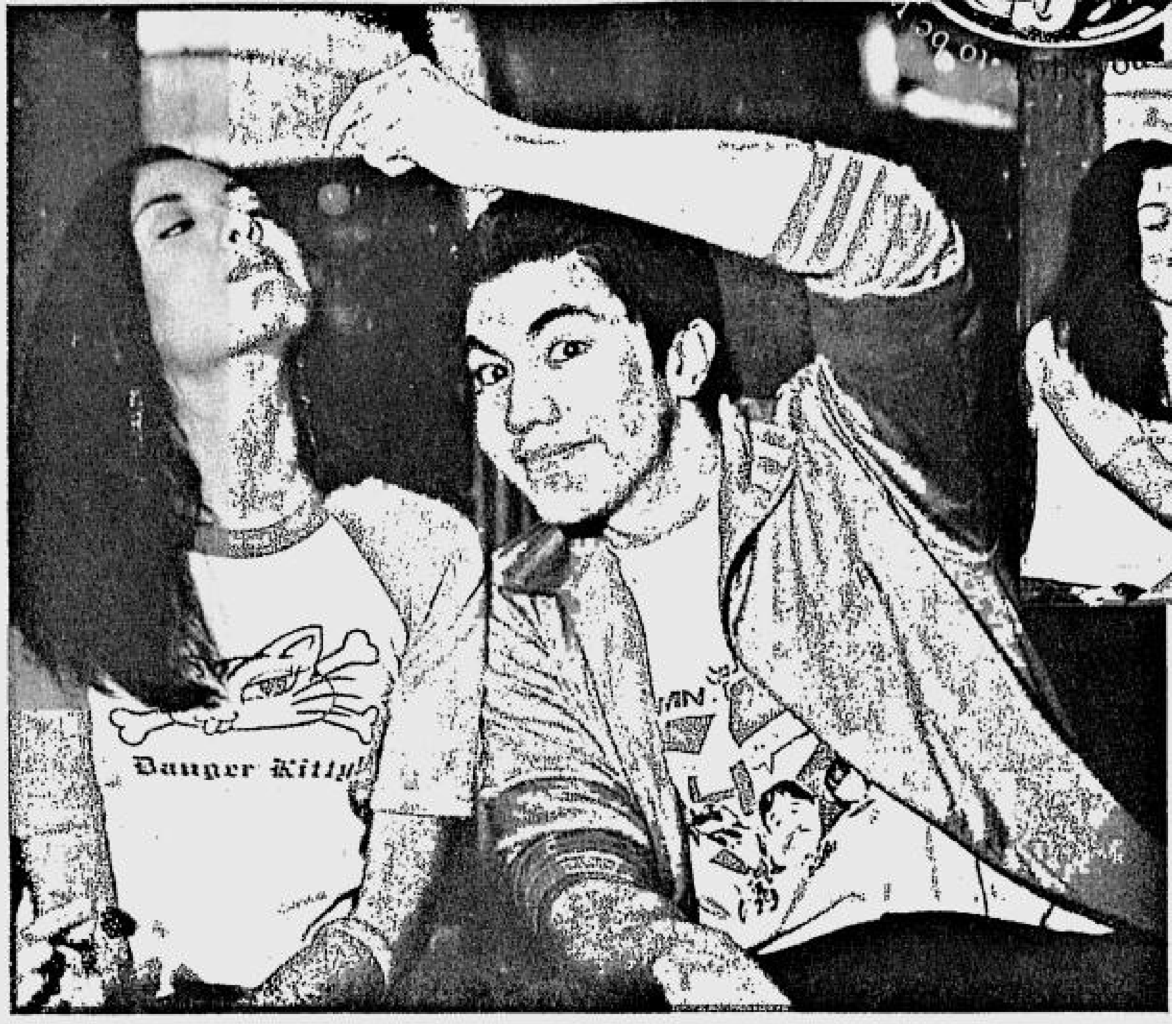
Treat *for twos*

Text by Happy David
Photos by Romy Homillada

ON Feb. 13, Luis Manzano and Ala Paredes have a date. They will be hosting Close-Up's Lovapalooza event at Roxas Boulevard's Baywalk side. On this night, 5,000 couples will try to beat the world record for the most number of people kissing simultaneously. There are also performances by hot local artists, including Jay-R, Paolo Santos, Malik, Restrospect, 7th Soul and Freestyle.

Register at closeupplanet.com and you get in for free.



CHERRY temptations. Luis and Ala show how it's done.

Luis Philippe Santos Manzano

22

What's keeping you busy?

Practicum, Myx, "ASAP," endorsements, looking/waiting for love.

Love is... a feeling wherein you can write or talk about it all your life and not come close to how it really feels like.

Where will you be and who would you be with on Valentine's Day?

Valentine's Eve—I'll be hosting Lovapalooza [on] Valentine's Day itself—not sure.

Tell us about...

Your favorite Valentine memory:

Giving my date so many roses that I can't even remember how many.

The best Valentine's gift you've received:

A box of my favorite oatmeal cookies.

The best Valentine's gift you've given:

A lot! Can't remember.

The most romantic place you've been to:

Although some may not consider it romantic, I would say Bangkok.

Your ideal partner:

A lady that I can take anywhere, a lady who can be comfortable around my family and friends.

Your ideal romantic evening:

Just walking or sitting anywhere, holding my girl's hand or just staring at her while kissing her from time to time.

Your most memorable kiss:

I was in Batangas, I kissed my girl and for the first time, she said, "I love you."

Your worst heartbreak:

Wanting to get back with someone who didn't want to and liking someone who's with someone or who likes someone else.

How far would you go for love?

I would give up anything and everything for true love.

Choose:

Red or black? Black.

Flowers or chocolates? Chocolates.

Hugs or kisses? Kisses.

Dumper or dumpee? Dumpee.

Watching the sunset at the beach or a candlelit dinner for two? Sunset at the beach.

Would you rather ask someone out or be asked out? Either way.

Would you kiss on a first date? Yes.

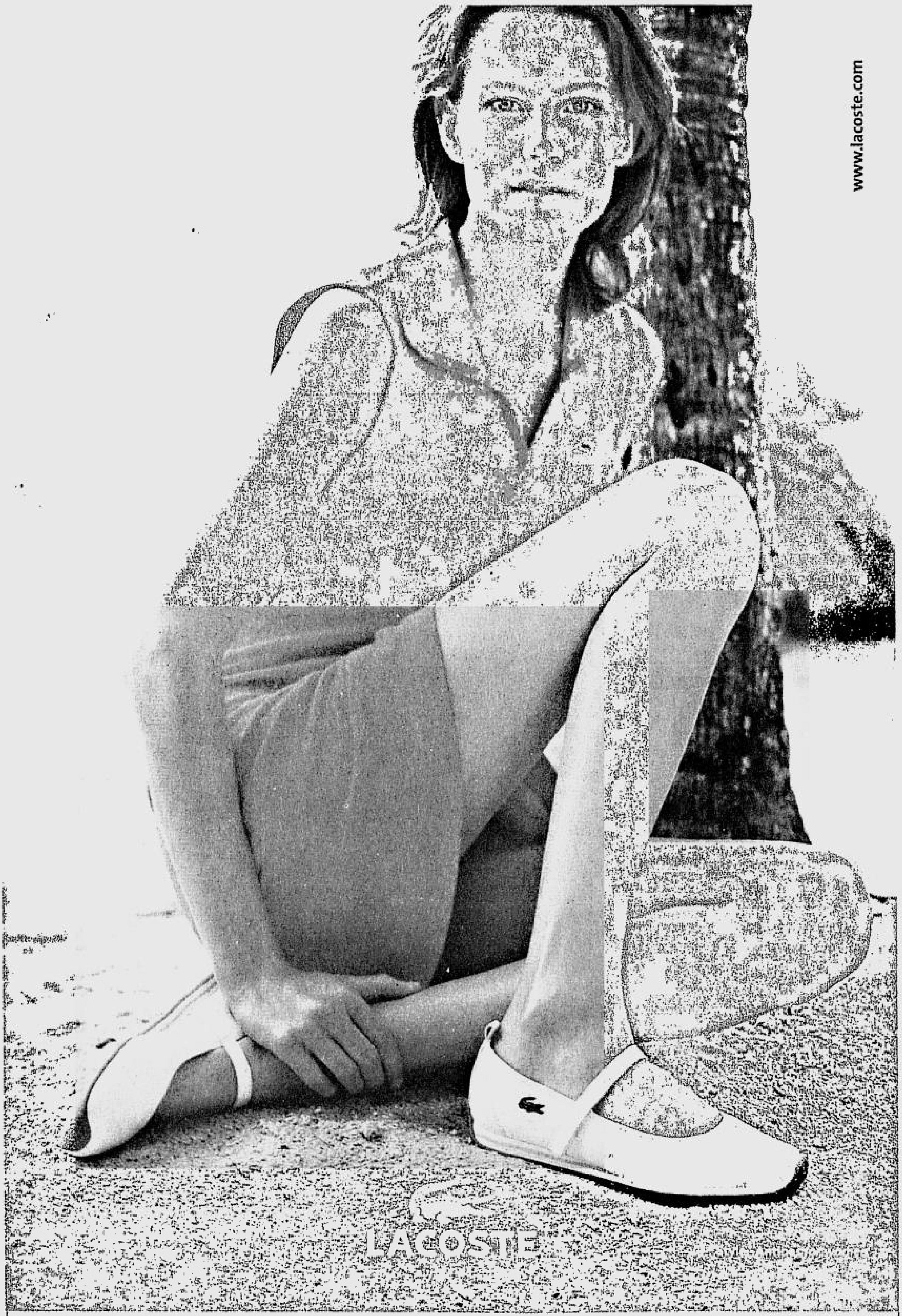
Do you believe in soulmates? Yes.

Do you believe in love at first sight? Yes.

Would you call yourself romantic? Yes, hopeless romantic.

TREAT/ F2

THE COZY twosome in a walk to remember.



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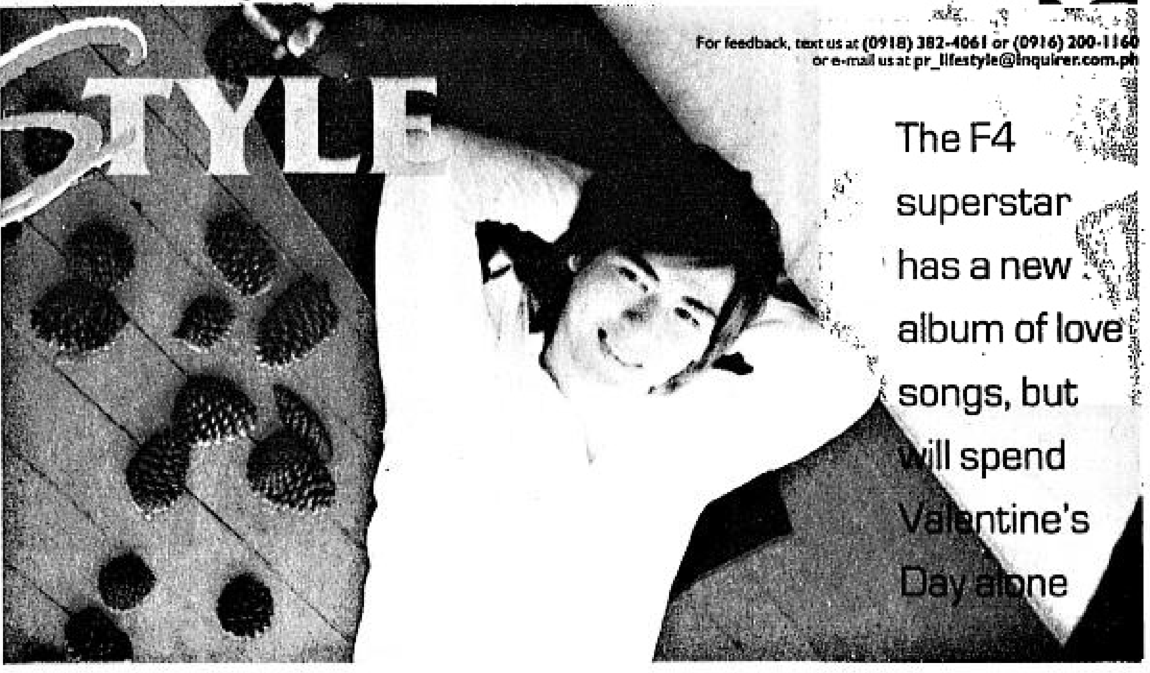
Make Vic your Valentine



The F4 superstar has a new album of love songs, but will spend Valentine's Day alone

Tim Yap

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Then again, due to the constant shrieks of **Ruth Navarra**, this paper's resident F4 fan club president (I'm sure there would be a lot who would fight her for the title), plus the poor souls who would rise up to heaven with the mere sight of Vic's autographed photo, I decided to hie off to Hong Kong, to see what lay beneath those famed locks that sang those immortal lyrics, "Oh baby, baby, baby..."

He stands up to greet me, and I realize that he is much taller in person. Everything else is very much the same—his long, brown-dyed hair, lost-puppy-dog eyes and his wide I'm-a-good-boy grin.

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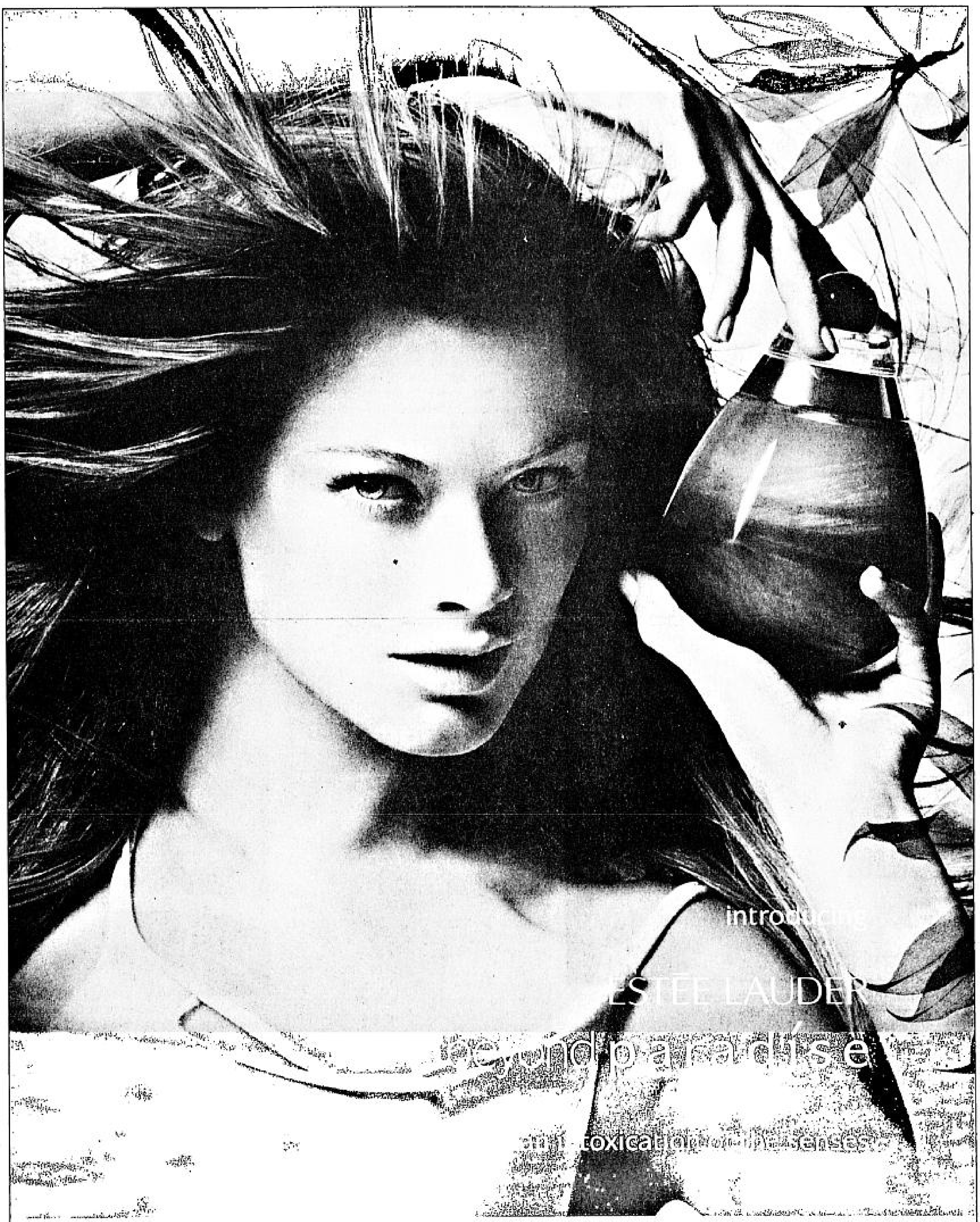
MAKE/ G2

I AM NOT THE OFFICIAL F4 CHRONICLER. Yaparazzi with Vic Zhou in Hong Kong

"MY friends in school are very supportive and protective of me... Sometimes even more than my family."



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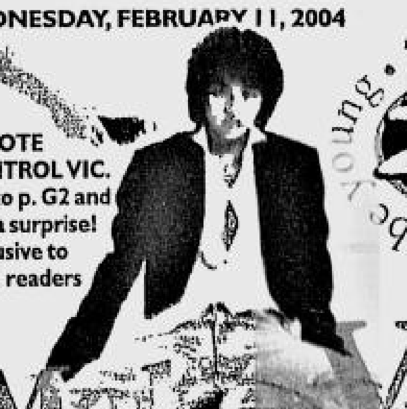
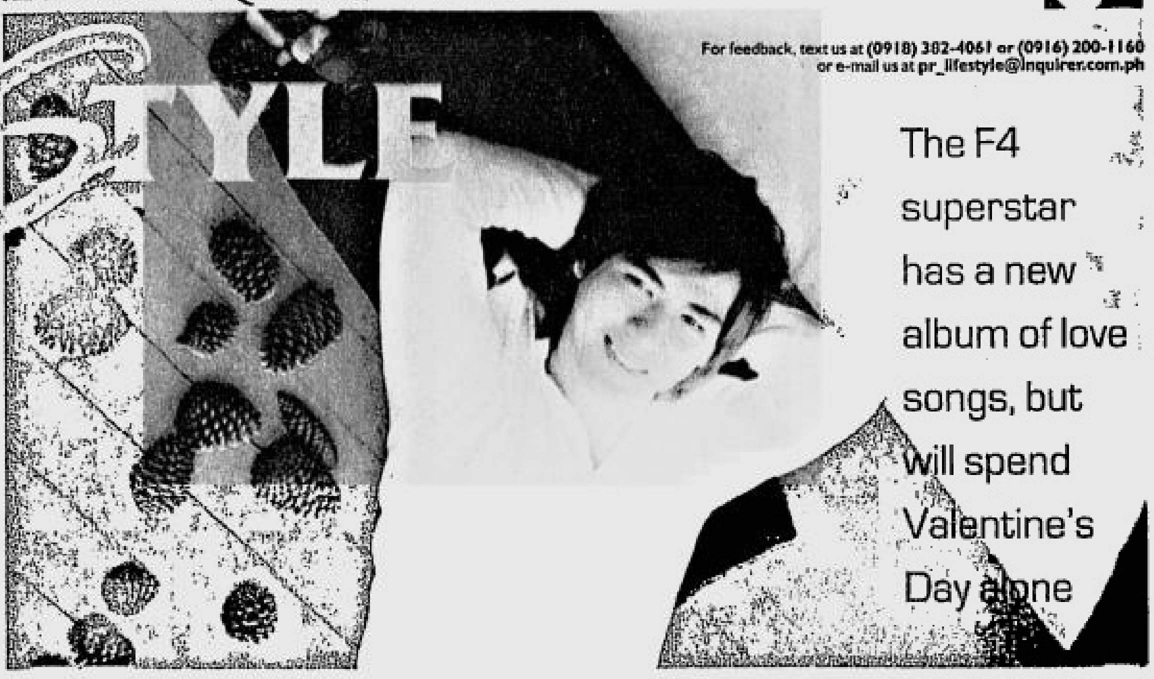


REMOTE CONTROL VIC. Flip to p. G2 and find a surprise! Exclusive to 2bU! readers

Make Vic your Valentine



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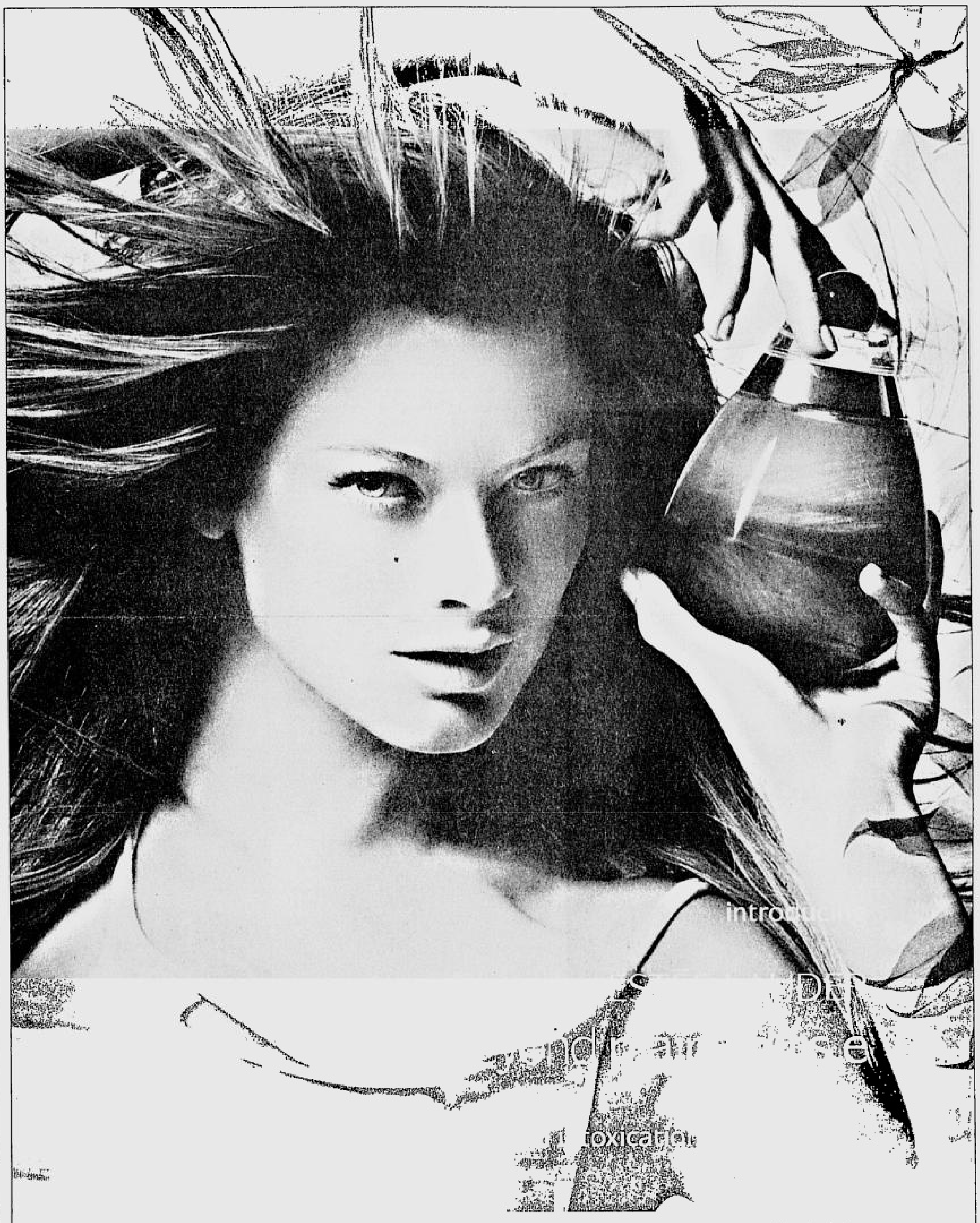

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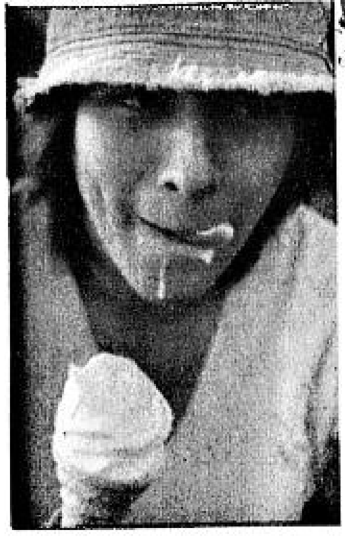
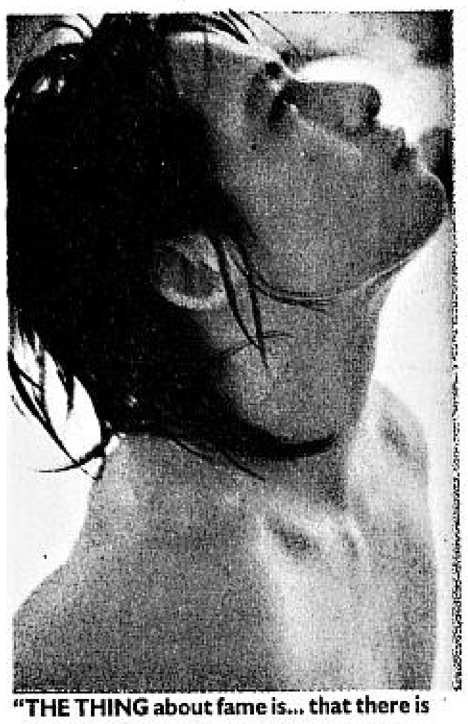
"LAST time I cried was... last night, before going to sleep, rehearsing a scene for my new series."



member... I love you
周渝民 記得我愛你
ZAI ZAI'S sketch of himself

VIC says: "Remember, I love you." Exclusive for 2bU! readers—cut and clip your own autographed Vic Zhou album cover.

Make Vic your Valentine


"THE THING about fame is... that there is too much loss of privacy."

F4 FANTASY. The photos you see on this page (except for the album cover) are from the Vic Zhou photo book.

From page G1

Magic Kitsch-en

He compliments me on my jacket, which I accept graciously. "You look like a magician," he tells me earnestly. Uhh, that wasn't what I was aiming for. Then again, I start doing magic tricks as we progress in the interview.

"I've always loved performing in private, but I never expected to do it in public," Vic explains pensively as he looks back on his childhood. "I was a very naughty but quiet kid—I was painfully shy."

This shyness is actually still apparent in Vic, who, despite being a regional superstar at 22 (he is still in school, taking up business management by the way), projects a humble and down-to-earth aura that is rare among his colleagues who all have rehearsed spiels and readily plastered smiles for fans.

If **Jerry Yan** is the one you'll fool around and elope with, Vic is the type you'd love to bring home to mom.

With Vic, you can actually sense sincerity. Like a kid, he is very spontaneous and candid with the people around him.

He giggles a lot too. When Sony's **Roslyn Reyes** was with him last year to shoot station ID's (you know, those "Hi, I am Vic and you are watching 'Eat Bulaga!'" type of stuff), he kept on cracking up every time he spoke English. Maybe he finds his English funny. Or it's his self-deprecating side.

At his first Manila concert last year, a booming voice announced his name, "Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Vic Zhou!" He came out, waved at the audience, and said, "Alo, alo, alooooo! For the crowd, this was the first time outside of ABS-CBN dubbing that they were hearing Zai Zai's speaking voice. Of course, it endeared him more to them. Well, he can speak Arabic for all I care and I'm sure they'll still be enamored.

Barbie's 'titi'

When pretty pretty new Myx Vj **Salie Acupan** exclaims to him, "My mom loves you, my brother loves you, my sister loves you, I love you!"—he giggles some more. And when she says, "You're so big in the Philippines, you're so big everywhere!" His giggles turn into bursts. Well, any guy would blush when described as that "big."

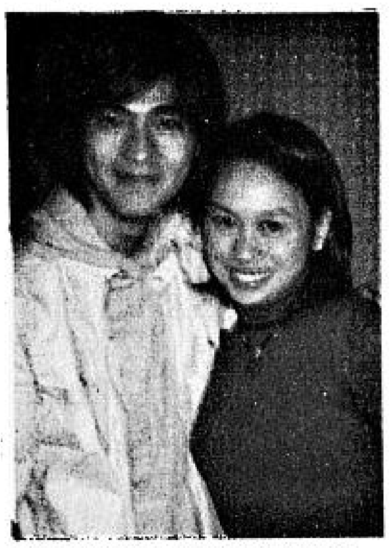
If he isn't busy (which is rare, really) with tapings, shoots and promo tours, this big guy prefers to spend his time with computer games—he can spend all day playing with his gadgets and being on the Net, if not catching up on lost sleep.

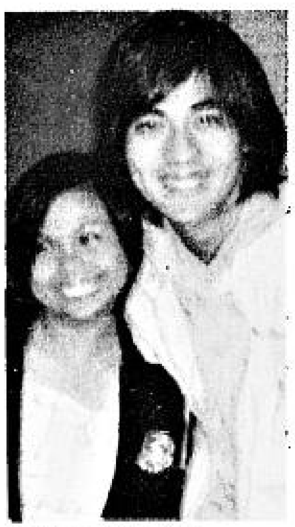
"I can't believe it—I think I'm gonna cry! He hugged me and asked if I was Chinese!" gushed **Tin Tin Morada**, a student of Miriam College, who got the chance to meet Vic in Hong Kong via a Sony Music contest in the Myx music channel. I told Tin Tin that she should have answered "Not yet—but I will be if you marry me!"

He says he's not sure when he and F4 are coming back to Manila, and that the last time they were all together was to support their co F4 mate Vanness Wu at the premiere of his film "Star Runner."

About his co-star in the hit series "Meteor Garden," he confides to me that he and Barbie have gotten so close that they almost have a brother-sister ceremony. Hmm, I wonder what kind of ceremony would that be? And that Barbie calls him her "titi."

Okay, before dirty minds start thinking, "titi" in Mandarin means "little brother."


SONY SONIC BOOM. With Roslyn Reyes of Sony, a female version of Ken


WILL YOU VIC MY VALENTINE? With Tin Tin Morada, Myx winner

"MY most unforgettable moment... was when I was still struggling. I was so poor."

'Remember I Love You'

I'm listening to his latest album (launched just last week, whose cover is shown above, with Vic's autograph—a Valentine treat for 2bU! readers) with ballads and some fast, catchy tunes very different from his past musical collections—filled with stories of love won and lost.

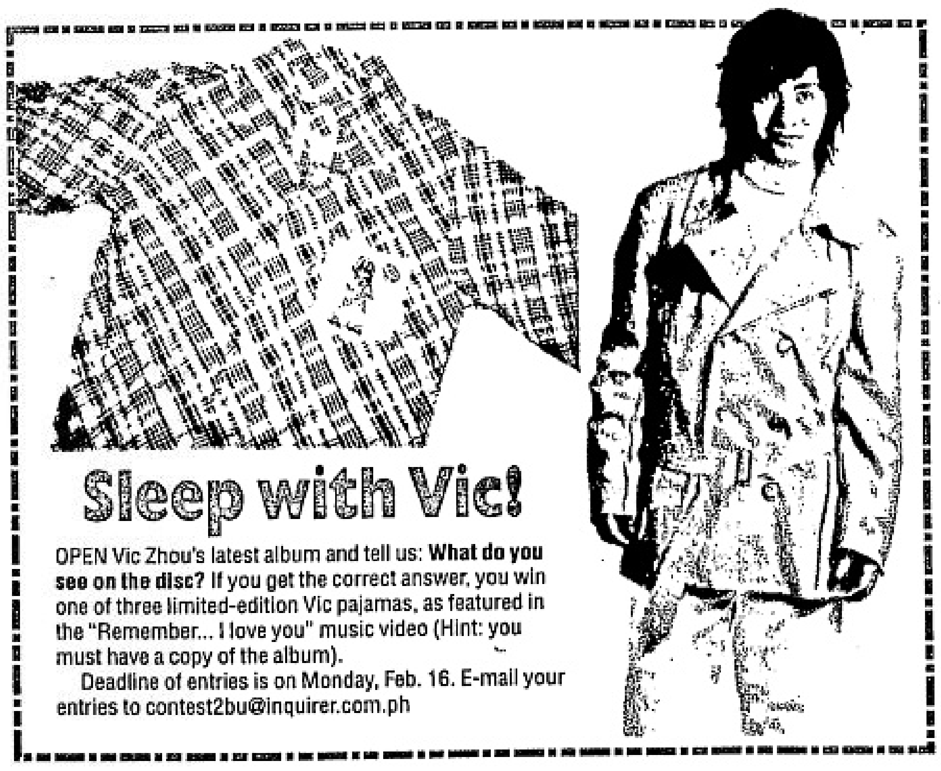
"When you're shooting a video, you meet the girl for the first time and you guys have to pretend like you're so in love. With a TV series, you really get to meet the person, because you spend so much time together." He ponders on the difference on shooting with diverse media. There is really something underneath all that hair.

Vic then recalls his moments shooting the videos for this album. "Every story, the girl always leaves me. I guess that's the story of my life, too." Instead of feeling self-pity, he laughs at himself good-naturedly. Okay, I can now hear girls screaming, "Choose me, I won't leave yoooouuuu!"

He tells me that he plans to sing these songs to his future girlfriend. But now that he hasn't found anyone yet, his Valentine's day would consist of work, work, work.

So, any "work" volunteers?

"MY audience has grown up. They are more mature now, like me." His new album contains songs that are not Vic's usual fare—music of a different tempo and beat.



Sleep with Vic!

OPEN Vic Zhou's latest album and tell us: **What do you see on the disc?** If you get the correct answer, you win one of three limited-edition Vic pajamas, as featured in the "Remember... I love you" music video (Hint: you must have a copy of the album).

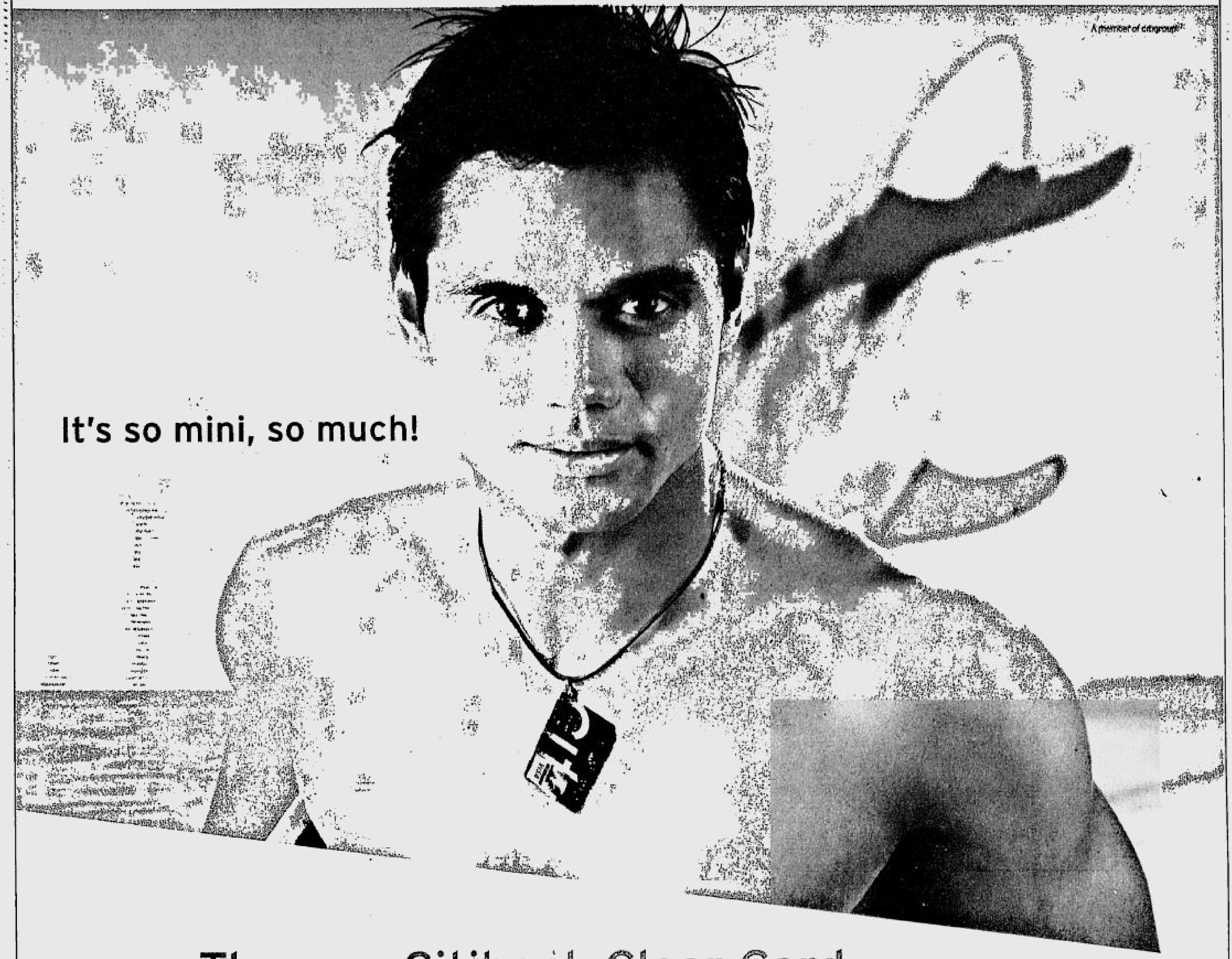
Deadline of entries is on Monday, Feb. 16. E-mail your entries to contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph

NEWEST VJ ON THE BLOCK. Myx VJ Salie Acupan joins the F1 fun.

LO AND BEHOLD! Ricky Lo gets the lowdown on the Chinese charmer.

MYX MATCHIN'. Mila Labendia documents the Vic Zhou mania.

It's not just a Credit Card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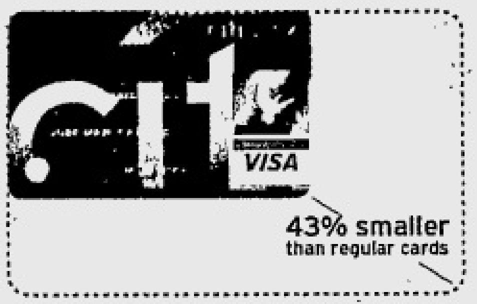
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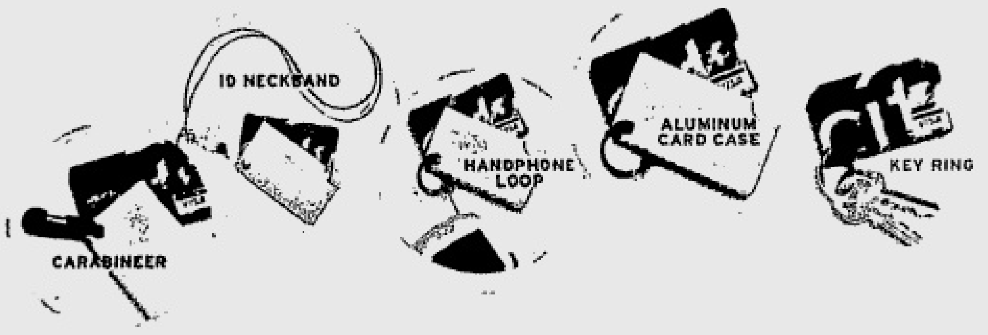
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TECHNOCRAT

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Back-to-back treat for Boyz II Men and Brian McKnight fans

BOYZ II Men will share the spotlight with Brian McKnight at the Ultra Open Field on Feb. 13, 8 p.m. And here's a bonus treat for all Boyz II Men and Brian McKnight concert watchers. Get a chance to win fabulous Valentine's gifts, such as a weekend getaway to Bagulo, overnight stay at Discovery Suites, dinner date for two and more!

Here's how to join :

1. Every Boyz II Men and Brian McKnight concert ticket entitles you to qualify for the raffle.
2. Send your name, address, tel. number and seat number (found on your concert ticket) and e-mail it to super@inquirer.com.ph. All entries must be in by Feb. 11. Draw date will be on Feb. 14.
3. Winners will be notified through mail and the Lifestyle/2bU! sections of the INQUIRER. Please keep your ticket stubs for verification.

Here are the winners of tickets to the Boyz II Men and Brian McKnight concert promo:

Reymund Yu Sio
Pauline Marie Ceniza
Beverly Grace S. Coronel
Maan Guzman
Charles Bautista
Cheryl Polican
Dino Rafael De Los Reyes
Ayvi Alcain

Ticket prizes are as follows: P2,950 for premiere, P2,650 for de luxe, P1,550 for patron, P750 for the bleachers and P350 for general admission. Tickets are available at all National Bookstore Ticketworld outlets. Call 3742222, 3749999, 8919999.

BOYZ II Men

Share with us your favorite memories

WHAT was your best experience at a Shakey's restaurant?

E-mail us your answers (not more than 300 words please) at contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph. Don't forget to include the branch where your story happened. Send your entries along with your name, age, school/office and contact numbers.

This contest is in line with the launch of Shakey's new "old-look" store design and colors.

One winner of a gift certificate from Shakey's will be chosen every week. All entries will be eligible for the grand prize: a family or *barkada* trip for six people to Baguio inclusive of transportation, accommodations and P5,000 worth of Shakey's gift certificates.

This week's winner:

"It was one of those rainy September Sunday afternoon of 1994. My sister Elvie was kind enough to drop me at Shakey's Dau for an early dinner (her treat) prior to my boarding the bus at the terminal right next to the restaurant. I was headed to Makati where I worked at Solidbank (my first job after college) under a probationary contract. After getting a table at a corner near the window, sis excused herself to go to the washroom while I ordered two Bunch of Lunch combos, extra mojos, a coke and a rootbeer.

"When she came back, she was with Donna, her former classmate in high school who happened to be in the washroom as well. Obviously the rain got the better of her as her hair was still soaking wet, making her look quite attractive in a funny sort of way. I was introduced to her and she sat at our table, ordering a mango juice, a double thin crust manager's choice (her favorite) and three banana splits (her treat).

"It had been more than four years since my sister and Donna last saw each other, and they excitedly talked about a lot of things while I pretended to watch the PBA game on the TV set. But I was actually eavesdropping. I found it amusing to hear Donna talk, laugh and giggle. I suddenly found myself liking her a lot. 'Gee, this chick is somethin" I told myself silently.

"We learned that she was headed to Makati also, and so took the bus with me. The rest is history. The bus ride was a sequel to that wonderful dinner at Shakey's and the beginning of a romantic affair that ended in marriage for us in 1996. Daynee, our little angel, is now 7 and Donna and I are still happy together."—**Andy Roque, Pasay City**

Winners may claim their prizes at the INQUIRER Bldg. Chino Roces Ave. cor. Yague and Mascardo Sts. Makati on Mondays, 4 p.m. onwards. Look for Pam or Ruth. Call 8978808 local 325.

Entries shall become property of Shakey's Philippines and may be used for publicity purposes.

Winners may be requested to appear for photo sessions and other publicity-related matters.

Win tickets to James Ingram-Patti Austin Valentine concert

THIS week's lucky winner will bring home a copy of James Ingram's latest album and VIP tickets to the much-anticipated James Ingram and Patti Austin "Heart to Heart" live in Manila concert on Saturday, Feb. 14 at the Manila Film Center Open Ground (beside PICC).

This week's winner:

What is the grooviest Valentine's gift you ever got and why?

"I had this long-distance relationship with an American girl my age. She was nice, pretty, decent, responsible and mature. It was a tough situation that I barely got to talk to her on the phone because of the cost. Nor could I physically express to her how I felt, how much I loved her dearly, so we just settled for webcam chats most of the time.

"Until last year, a day before Valentine, where she was nowhere to be found on the Internet. I immediately called her house, and her mom told me she left two days ago to stay with a friend. I was puzzled, sad, wondering where the hell she went without even telling me.

"It was evening then, and I just decided to stay in the house and bring to bed my feelings of loneliness and longing. After an hour, our maid knocked on my room's door and told me I had a visitor.

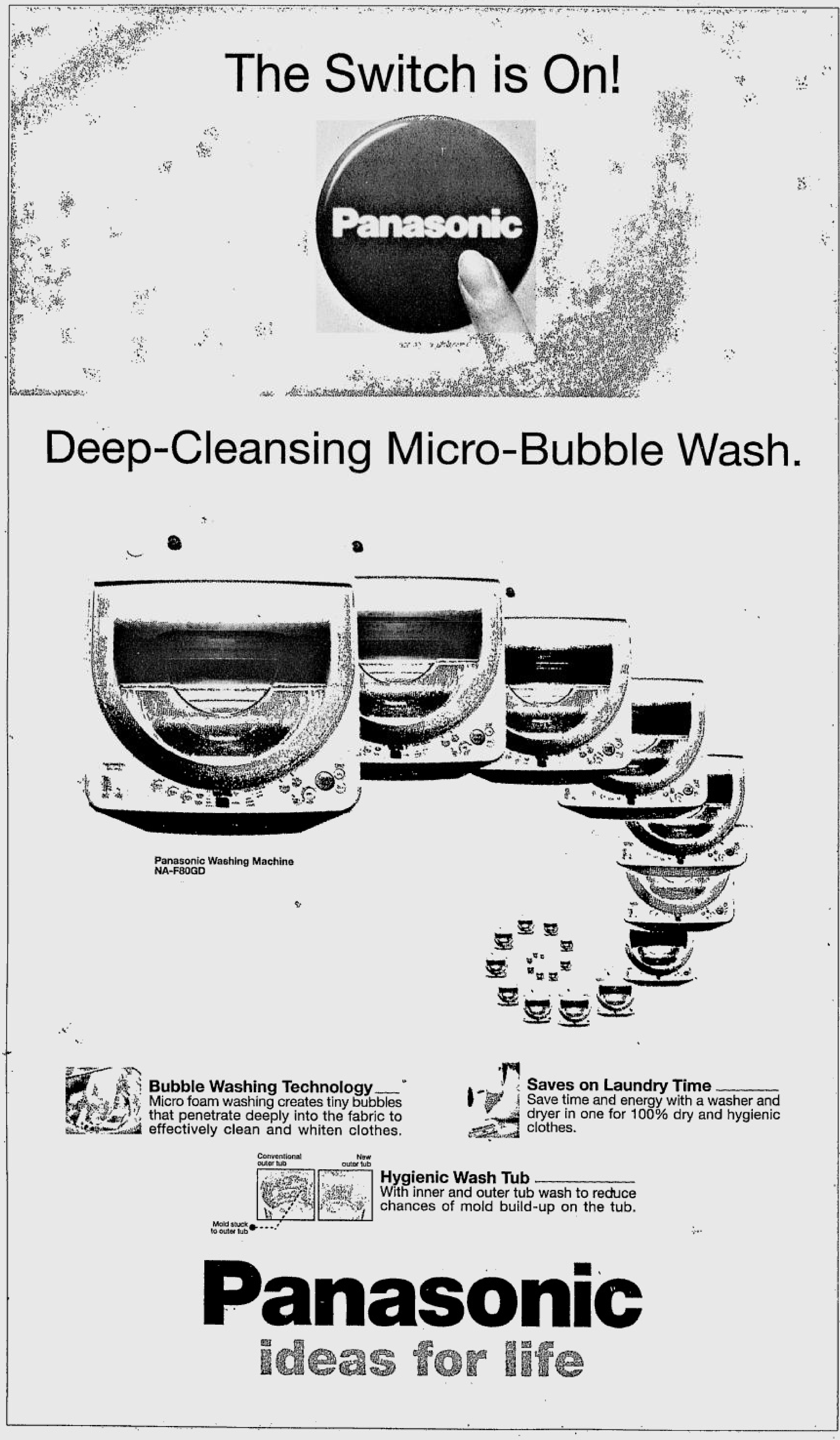
"When I came down to check, to my great surprise, it was her! I jumped for joy and excitement and hugged her so tight. It turned out she had saved a lot for a year so she could spend two weeks with me. She was able to find our house with the help of a Filipina friend.

"My family willingly accommodated her, and we spent two weeks of happiness together. So that was the biggest gift I've ever had for Valentine's day—having and spending it with the love of my life, who travelled all the way from the US just to be with me.

"This coming Valentine's day, she'll be coming again, as this is our third anniversary. And what better way to celebrate it than to watch a concert of two of my all-time favorite international artists and have a candlelit dinner for two afterwards? Hope I win! God bless..." —**Berl William V. Angeles Jr., Brgy. Poblacion, Makati City**

Winner(s) must present their ID when claiming VIP tickets and James Ingram's latest CD at Circe Communications Inc. Unit 809 Vicente Madrigal Bldg. 6793 Ayala Ave., Makati. Look for Mic Florendo or Flor Hardin or call 8172940.

Tickets are now on sale in all SM Ticketnet outlets at very affordable prices: reserved seats at P1,932 and P1,305 and regular seats at P783 and P366 (inclusive of Ticketnet's 4.4-percent service charge). Call 9115555 or 3735734.



The Switch is On!

Deep-Cleansing Micro-Bubble Wash.

Panasonic Washing Machine NA-F80GD

Bubble Washing Technology
Micro foam washing creates tiny bubbles that penetrate deeply into the fabric to effectively clean and whiten clothes.

Saves on Laundry Time
Save time and energy with a washer and dryer in one for 100% dry and hygienic clothes.

Hygienic Wash Tub
With inner and outer tub wash to reduce chances of mold build-up on the tub.

Panasonic
ideas for life

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Back-to-back treat for Boyz II Men and Brian McKnight fans

BOYZ II Men will share the spotlight with Brian McKnight at the Ultra Open Field on Feb. 13, 8 p.m. And here's a bonus treat for all Boyz II Men and Brian McKnight concert watchers. Get a chance to win fabulous Valentine's gifts, such as a weekend getaway to Baguio, overnight stay at Discovery Suites, dinner date for two and more!

Here's how to join :

1. Every Boyz II Men and Brian McKnight concert ticket entitles you to qualify for the raffle.
2. Send your name, address, tel. number and seat number (found on your concert ticket) and e-mail it to super@inquirer.com.ph. All entries must be in by Feb. 11. Draw date will be on Feb. 14.
3. Winners will be notified through mail and the Lifestyle/2bU! sections of the INQUIRER. Please keep your ticket stubs for verification.

Here are the winners of tickets to the Boyz II Men and Brian McKnight concert promo:

Reymund Yu Sio
Pauline Marie Ceniza
Beverly Grace S. Coronel
Maan Guzman
Charles Bautista
Cheryl Polican
Dino Rafael De Los Reyes
Ayvi Alcain

Ticket prizes are as follows: P2,950 for premiere, P2,650 for de luxe, P1,550 for patron, P750 for the bleachers and P350 for general admission. Tickets are available at all National Bookstore Ticketworld outlets. Call 3742222, 3749999, 8919999.

BOYZ II Men

Share with us your favorite memories

WHAT was your best experience at a Shakey's restaurant?

E-mail us your answers (not more than 300 words please) at contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph. Don't forget to include the branch where your story happened. Send your entries along with your name, age, school/office and contact numbers.

This contest is in line with the launch of Shakey's new "old-look" store design and colors.

One winner of a gift certificate from Shakey's will be chosen every week. All entries will be eligible for the grand prize: a family or *barkada* trip for six people to Baguio inclusive of transportation, accommodations and P5,000 worth of Shakey's gift certificates.

This week's winner:

"It was one of those rainy September Sunday afternoon of 1994. My sister Elvie was kind enough to drop me at Shakey's Dau for an early dinner (her treat) prior to my boarding the bus at the terminal right next to the restaurant. I was headed to Makati where I worked at Solidbank (my first job after college) under a probationary contract. After getting a table at a corner near the window, sis excused herself to go to the washroom while I ordered two Bunch of Lunch combos, extra mojos, a coke and a rootbeer.

"When she came back, she was with Donna, her former classmate in high school who happened to be in the washroom as well. Obviously the rain got the better of her as her hair was still soaking wet, making her look quite attractive in a funny sort of way. I was introduced to her and she sat at our table, ordering a mango juice, a double thin crust manager's choice (her favorite) and three banana splits (her treat).

"It had been more than four years since my sister and Donna last saw each other, and they excitedly talked about a lot of things while I pretended to watch the PBA game on the TV set. But I was actually eavesdropping. I found it amusing to hear Donna talk, laugh and giggle. I suddenly found myself liking her a lot. 'Gee, this chick is somethin" I told myself silently.

"We learned that she was headed to Makati also, and so took the bus with me. The rest is history. The bus ride was a sequel to that wonderful dinner at Shakey's and the beginning of a romantic affair that ended in marriage for us in 1996. Daynee, our little angel, is now 7 and Donna and I are still happy together."—**Andy Roque, Pasay City**

Winners may claim their prizes at the INQUIRER Bldg. Chino Roces Ave. cor. Yague and Mascardo Sts. Makati on Mondays, 4 p.m. onwards. Look for Pam or Ruth. Call 8978808 local 325.

Entries shall become property of Shakey's Philippines and may be used for publicity purposes.

Winners may be requested to appear for photo sessions and other publicity-related matters.

Win tickets to James Ingram-Patti Austin Valentine concert

THIS week's lucky winner will bring home a copy of James Ingram's latest album and VIP tickets to the much-anticipated James Ingram and Patti Austin "Heart to Heart" live in Manila concert on Saturday, Feb. 14 at the Manila Film Center Open Ground (beside PICC).

This week's winner:

What is the grooviest Valentine's gift you ever got and why?

"I had this long-distance relationship with an American girl my age. She was nice, pretty, decent, responsible and mature. It was a tough situation that I barely got to talk to her on the phone because of the cost. Nor could I physically express to her how I felt, how much I loved her dearly, so we just settled for webcam chats most of the time.

"Until last year, a day before Valentine, where she was nowhere to be found on the Internet. I immediately called her house, and her mom told me she left two days ago to stay with a friend. I was puzzled, sad, wondering where the hell she went without even telling me.

"It was evening then, and I just decided to stay in the house and bring to bed my feelings of loneliness and longing. After an hour, our maid knocked on my room's door and told me I had a visitor.

"When I came down to check, to my great surprise, it was her! I jumped for joy and excitement and hugged her so tight. It turned out she had saved a lot for a year so she could spend two weeks with me. She was able to find our house with the help of a Filipina friend.

"My family willingly accommodated her, and we spent two weeks of happiness together. So that was the biggest gift I've ever had for Valentine's day—having and spending it with the love of my life, who travelled all the way from the US just to be with me.

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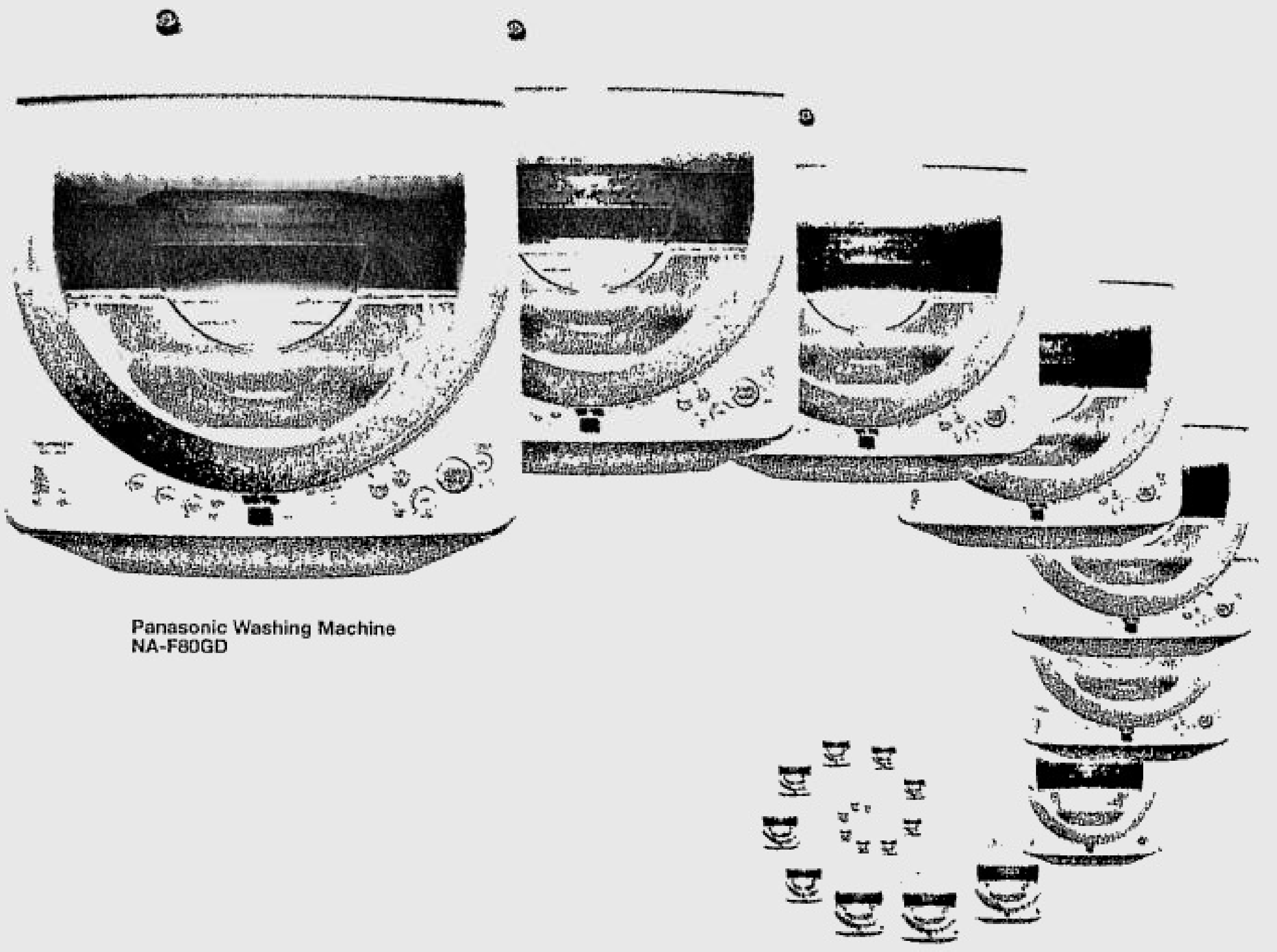

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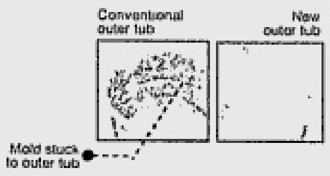
NA-F80GD

Bubble Washing Technology
Micro foam washing creates tiny bubbles that penetrate deeply into the fabric to effectively clean and whiten clothes.

Saves on Laundry Time
Save time and energy with a washer and dryer in one for 100% dry and hygienic clothes.



Hygienic Wash Tub
With inner and outer tub wash to reduce chances of mold build-up on the tub.

Panasonic
ideas for life

Lawyer disputes high court jurisdiction over FPJ case

Story on PAGE A2

Abat mad; 25th death rites for son canceled

By Alcuin Papa

FORMER Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat, who is calling for the scrapping of the May elections, is indignant at what he described as efforts of the government to silence him.

Speaking yesterday in a press conference at his office in Quezon City, Abat decried the Armed Forces' abrupt cancella-

ABAT / A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Gil vows to pay nat'l debt but can't pay bills

By Grace C. Albasin
PDI Mindanao Bureau

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—He promised to free the country from debts if elected president. But presidential aspirant Eddie Gil failed to settle his obligations to several businesses here, including a hotel where he and several supporters had stayed since Wednesday.

GIL/ A8

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Thursday, February 12, 2004 ★★ 54 pages / 6 sections / vol. 19 / no. 66 P15 website: www.inq7.net

Roco hits Biazon betrayal

K-4 offer of P30M to senator deplored

By Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio

RAUL Roco is still "in shock" that Sen. Rodolfo Biazon bolted his camp to join President Macapagal-Arroyo's coalition K-4.

"I used to look up to him as 6'2" tall. Now, he's not even two inches tall," the standard-bearer of the Alyansa ng Pag-Asa told INQUIRER chief executives, editors and reporters on Monday night.

ELECTION 2004

Roco said it was Biazon who approached Reporma's Renato de Villa last November to express his desire to join the Alyansa. Once taken in, he even attended the party's proclamation last Dec. 30, Roco said.

"When we agreed [to his entry], he shook hands with us like an officer and a gentleman," Roco said, adding:

"I'm amazed at the character buildup of those who come from the PMA (Philippine Military Academy) ... I think he's a factory defect."

From reports, Biazon went on a "leave of absence" from the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino last Nov. 27 and joined Roco the next day. He moved to Ms Macapagal's camp on Jan. 4 as a member of the Liberal Party, which had coalesced with the ruling

ROCO/ A8

Bicolano journalist shot dead in mouth

By Joyce M. Mejillano and Ronnie Lorejo
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—They wanted to silence him so they shot him several times in the mouth, according to the wife of newspaper publisher and radio commentator Ruel Endrinal.

Endrinal, 45, known to his radio program listeners and friends as "Mr. Guwapo," was walking along the road some 50 meters from his house in Barangay Oro Site here when two unidentified men pumped five bullets into his mouth and other parts of the body.

He was on his way to radio station dzRC for his 6:30 a.m. program called MBA (Metro Banat Albay).

Earlier, at around 2 a.m., in Tandag City in Surigao del Sur, four motorcycle-riding men, who were wearing bonnets, fired at radio station dxRM. Arvin Malaza, station manager and radio commentator, said he was the target of the attack.

Endrinal was brought to the Tanchuling Hospital but was declared dead on arrival.

His assailants fled toward Barangay Barriada across the railway station, police said.

"It was still dark when we saw two men, whom we had not seen before, looking as if they were

BICOLANO/ A9

KT
TATAD
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ELECTION
2004

STARING the candidate in the eye is a portrait of poverty which Fernando Poe Jr. said when he launched his presidential campaign on Tuesday "is the biggest scandal in the country." He accused the Macapagal administration of not defending and taking care of the poor, who suddenly find themselves thrust into the limelight as the focus of concern of every candidate in the running for whatever office. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

DOUBLE TRAGEDY

Man killed 24 days after wife died at sea

By Blanche S. Rivera

HE WAS the quiet force that allowed his wife to set sail.

Twelve days after attending a shipboard ceremony in Norway which honored his wife Marife and other dead seafarers of the ill-fated MV Rocknes, Gerardo Cave became a victim of tragedy himself.

Cave, 34, was gunned down by four armed men in Sta. Elena, Camarines Norte, on his way to visit his sick mother in Daet, police said Wednesday.

Gerardo is the husband of Marife Cave, 30, one of 18 crew members who died when the MV Rocknes capsized after running aground on Jan. 19. Only 12 people were rescued in the hours after the accident.

On Monday, the number of bodies retrieved from the wreck totaled 11, Norwegian, the local news agency reported. Two more bodies remain missing while many of the corpses have not yet been identified. The accident claimed the lives of 16 Filipinos,

MAN/ A9

GMA names Sandigan chief to high court

By Philip C. Tubeza and Armand N. Nocum

THE WIFE of the manager of boxing champion Manny Pacquiao has been appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo to the Supreme Court.

Minita Chico-Nazario, 64, replaces Associate Justice Josue Bellosillo who retired on Nov. 13.

Nazario is Ms Macapagal's eighth appointment to the high court, making her appointees the majority in the 15-member tribunal.

Nazario was delighted when she got a call from Malacañang informing her of her appointment while she was saying the *novena* to the Mother of Perpetual Help at the Redemptorist Church in Parañaque.

"I was very, very happy when I received the news," she said. "God is so kind."

Nazario was the Sandiganbayan presiding justice who drafted the resolution allowing ousted President Joseph Estrada to go abroad for knee surgery.

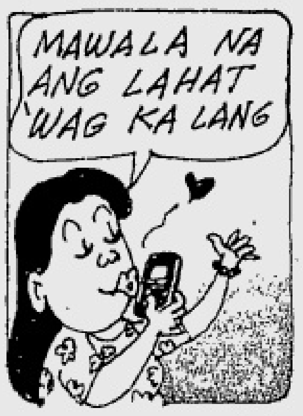
The resolution was widely believed to have been influenced by the President who had been keen on making a "peace offering" to Estrada to gain the sympathy of his supporters to bolster her candidacy.

But presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye was quick to douse speculation the appointment was a reward for the Sandiganbayan decision.

Bunye said the Judicial Bar Council had set very high standards for potential Supreme Court Justices .

He said that Nazario was on the JBC short list of possible replacement for Belosillo which included four others which he de-

GMA/ A6


MAWALA NA ANG LAHAT 'WAG KA LANG

Pinoys No. 1 in romancing cell phone

By Abigail L. Ho

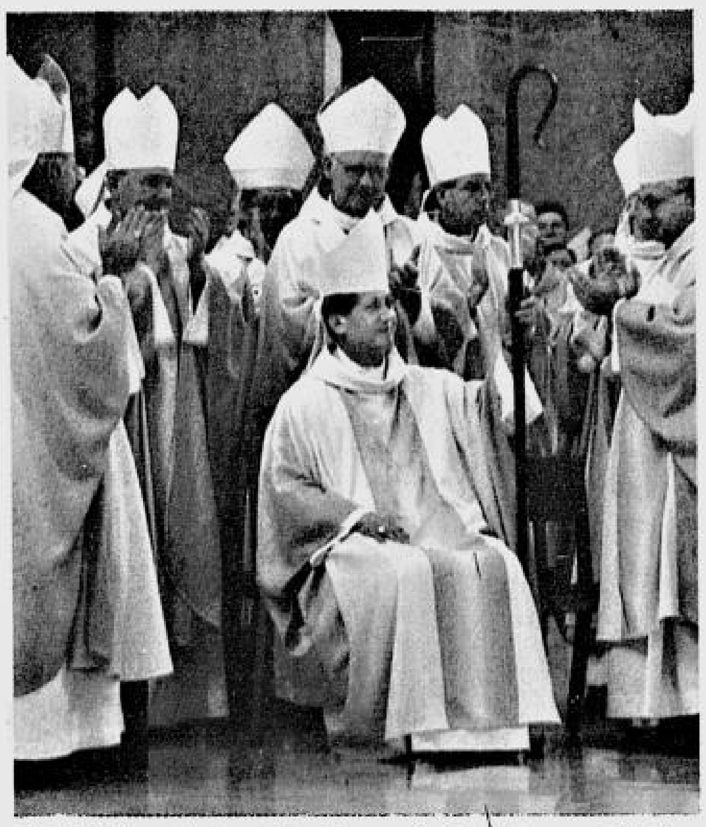
Can't live without it.

Won't leave home without it.

Especially on V-Day.

And so, once again, Pinoys topped other nationalities in romancing the cell phone.

PINOYS/ A9



STANDING ovation from his colleagues for Oscar Azarcon Solis, the United States' first Filipino bishop, after his ordination on Tuesday. AP

Novo Ecijano first Filipino bishop in US

By Ruben V. Nepales
PDI LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—A Roman Catholic priest born in San Jose, Nueva Ecija, on Tuesday afternoon became the first Filipino bishop in the United States.

Oscar Azarcon Solis, 50, was ordained at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels as one of five auxiliary bishops in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the largest and most diverse in America with 5 million Catholics, including 400,000 of Filipino ethnicity. Masses on Sunday are said in Filipino and 41 other languages.

In his first address as bishop, Solis said he "humbly" accepted the challenges of serving an increasingly diverse Catholic Church.

"I consider my appointment more than just an opportunity to become a part of the local church of Los Angeles, but more as a distinct privilege to serve our archdiocese, which is alive and vibrant with multiethnic communities," said Solis, a cum laude graduate in Theology at the University of Sto. Tomas in Manila.

In his homily, Cardinal Roger Mahony said he was excited to have Solis help lead the Church during a "challenging time" in which "a lot of people in our society and our culture don't want to hear the Gospel."

"We're looking forward to having him help unite, harmonize and energize" the Church, Maho ny said.

NOVO/ A6

SUBMITTING himself totally to the Lord, Bishop Solis is now one of five auxiliary bishops in the LA Archdiocese, the US' largest with 5 million Catholics. AP

RUBEN V NEPALES/ PDI LA CORRESPONDENT

"I WAS in a daze," Bishop tells the INQUIRER after his ordination attended by 3,000 people.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/12/04

Pinoy survives UAE crash

By Jerome Aning and Volt Contreras

ONLY two Filipinos were on board the Iranian plane carrying migrant workers that crashed last Tuesday in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, and one of them was probably dead, the foreign affairs department said yesterday.

The DFA declined to identify the Filipinos as a matter of policy.

A report from the labor department, however, said that one Filipino, Jorge Cruz, survived the crash and was said to be in critical condition at the Al Qassemi Hospital in Sharjah.

The body of another Filipino, the same report said, has been recovered but DOLE said they were also verifying reports that two other Filipinos were on board the plane.

The ANC cable station, citing sources from the Philippine Embassy in Abu Dhabi, said that one Filipino passenger, Engelbert Salenga, has been confirmed killed.

The plane's owner, Kish Airlines, has also issued an updated manifest showing four Filipinos on board, ANC said.

DFA spokesperson Julia Heidemann, quoting a report from Philippine ambassador to the UAE Libran Cabactulan, said that of the five passengers reported to have been pulled out alive from the wreckage, two were Filipinos.

The survivors could not be readily identified positively as they were wrapped in bandages.

Heidemann said two of the five died in the hospital but their nationalities were unknown.

She said that two of the remaining three survivors have been identified as Iranians and it was possible that the fifth survivor was the Filipino. *With a report from AP*

Lawyer disputes SC jurisdiction over FPJ case

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE LAWYER of Fernando Poe Jr. said the Supreme Court can hear the disqualification cases against the opposition presidential candidate only after the elections, even as the high court scheduled oral arguments next week on the case filed by lawyer Victoriano Fornier.

In a 17-page comment yesterday, lawyer Estelito Mendoza urged the SC to dismiss the petitions to disqualify Poe because the high court cannot yet take jurisdiction over them.

Mendoza said that under Section 4, Article VII of the Constitution, "the jurisdiction conferred upon the SC [as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal] may be invoked and exercised after the election and proclamation of the President or Vice President."

By invoking this section of the Constitution, the petitioners are "actually asking" the SC to convene itself into a Presidential Electoral Tribunal, he said.

No 'contest'

"Section 4, Article VII being invoked by petitioners speaks of contests relating to the election, returns and qualification of the President and Vice President. There is no 'contest' before the election," Mendoza said.

He pointed out that there would be no contest and returns until after elections are held, thus the declaration of ineligibility of a candidate may only be sought in an election protest or action for quo warranto filed within 10 days of a candidate's proclamation.

Lawyers Jeanette Tecson, Felix Desiderio and Zoilo Antonio Velez asked the Supreme Court to assume jurisdiction over the Poe disqualification case after the Commission on Elections dismissed Fornier's petition.

In an en banc resolution yesterday, the high court set oral arguments for the case next Thursday and ordered the respondents—the Comelec and Poe—to submit their comments on the petition by Monday.

Mendoza declined to answer the citizenship issues against Poe raised by the Tecson et al. petition, saying the SC had no jurisdiction and that the Comelec had dismissed them.

"The arguments in the petition before the Supreme Court on the citizenship of Poe are the same in the petition before the Comelec. These have been dismissed and the SC may not exercise jurisdiction over the petitions," he said.

Instead, Mendoza challenged the legal standing of the petitioners who asked the court to review the Comelec's decision to dismiss the disqualification case against Poe.

"Petitioners are no more than interlopers and intruders. They have no standing. Only the aggrieved party may bring before the Supreme Court on certiorari a judgment or resolution of the Comelec 30 days from receipt of a copy of the decision," he said.

Let the people decide, Poe allies urge

By Carlito Pablo

OPPOSITION presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. will carry on with the campaign and run even if the Supreme Court decides against him in the cases of disqualification alleging that he is not a natural-born Filipino.

This is the emerging consensus in the opposition camp, two Poe allies—Ernesto Herrera who is making a comeback bid to the Senate, and Manila Rep. Harry Angping—said in separate interviews yesterday.

Arguing that sovereignty and political authority emanates from the people, Herrera and Angping said the people should be asked to decide on the issue.

"[The] people's will is always supreme than any ruling from the courts," said Angping.

"It will be the people who will correct an injustice that could be perpetrated by the judicial system," said Herrera.

"The people's preference for a President shouldn't be allowed to be supplanted by what appears to be attempts to take Poe out of the race through default," said Angping.

To comments that such a move by Poe could be construed as defiance of a legal ruling from the country's highest court, Angping said: "The issue would have become political by then and it's the people who will decide the issue."

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A1-091, Series of 2004

No stars to spice up Roco show

By TJ Burgonio and Michael Ubac

UNLIKE his rivals, Raul Roco and his Alyansa ng Pagasa ticket have opted to tap young homegrown talents, in lieu of show biz and TV personalities, to draw crowds and spice up their campaign sorties in the countryside.

Jaime Galvez-Tan, Roco's campaign manager, said the hiring of talents who are natives in the campaign areas to provide entertainment was in keeping with its campaign theme: serving the youth and the poor.

"Our campaign is non-traditional. If ever, we will feature local talents, not show biz, hoopla and pizazz," he said in a phone interview. "Let's not all be glitz and galore in treating the people."

The candidates will give way to the young talents to do the "entertainment part," Tan added.

In contrast, the kick-off rallies of actor Fernando Poe Jr. and President Macapagal-Arroyo last Tuesday were all hyped up by the presence of show biz personalities.

Tan, however, admitted that some local artists had volunteered to grace Roco's rallies and entertain the crowd for free.

"They are volunteers; they don't get paid," he said, singling out singers Robert Seña and his wife Isay Alvarez, Joey Ayala, Celeste Legaspi and Pinky Marquez as among the volunteers.

Roco had said that while there would be "singing and dancing" in the rallies, these should not be the focus of the campaign.

Roco is also being supported by actor Bembol Roco and beauty titlists Aurora Pijuan and Margie Moran-Floirendo by going around Mindanao and Metro Manila to distribute leaflets.

After launching his campaign from the Villa San Miguel residence of retired Jaime Carinal Sin, Roco barnstormed his bailiwick, the Bicolandia, on the second day of his national campaign for the presidency.

In Naga City, his hometown, Roco told his fellow Bicolanos that his slate had met the standards set by the influential Catholic Church.

Speaking after a High Mass at the St. John the Evangelist Metropolitan Cathedral, the oldest Catholic Church in the country (1595), Roco said the Agenda of Hope—the ticket's platform—and the qualifications of the slate jived with the guidelines issued by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines in its Pastoral Letter on Jan. 18.

Be impartial, new Comelec execs told

By Martin P. Marfil and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE COUNTRY's election chief yesterday reminded the newly minted commissioners to be impartial amid fears raised by some sectors that they could be biased for the administration.

In a talk with newsmen, Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos said that while it is possible for officials to be used by the administration. "It is also possible that they may not help the administration..." Abalos said in Filipino, adding that everyone has biases and relatives.

The remarks came after Comelec commissioner Virgilio Olivar Garcillano made a courtesy call to Abalos.

Garcillano, a former Comelec field man who rose from the ranks, and Manuel Barcelona Jr. were recently named election commissioners, replacing former Commissioners Ralph Lantion and Luzviminda Tancangco who retired on Feb. 2.

This is the incumbent administration's fifth appointment in the seven-man commission.

Opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel had earlier cautioned against the appointment of Barcelona and Garcillano because of their affinity to .First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

Barcelona has been tagged as one of the campaign contributors of the President in 1998 while Garcillano has been accused by *Pimentel of being involved in the "dagdag-bawas"* election scam which deprived him of a seat in the Senate.

Garcillano parried criticisms that he was involved in anomalies during his term as Comelec regional head in Mindanao. He said that the issue apparently stemmed from the supposed cleanup of voters list in Mindanao and plans to talk to Pimentel about it.

"That was a carry-over of a long controversy... a misconception. If the padding of the list is concerned—I don't handle listings. If there are other things he (Pimentel) would like to complain about, we can discuss it," Garcillano said.

In a statement, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said it was unfair to "prejudge the competence and integrity" of the newly appointed commissioners.

"Let us give them a chance to prove their worth and we are confident that they will pass the test of public duty," he said.

Bunye said the President felt that Barcelona and Garcillano were the "most fit" to fill the vacant posts in a short list of candidates for Comelec commissioners.

Barcelona, whose father is the late Justice Manuel Barcelona, is a UP Law graduate (1957) and a member of the New York State Bar (1984). He is a principal partner of Barcelona, Barcelona and Magdamit Law. He was once a resident agent of All-Nippon Airways and he used to run a family-owned real estate firm.

Garcillano, a UE law graduate (1960), is a career official of the Comelec where he rose from special attorney in 1961 to his recent posting as regional director in Northern Mindanao. He obtained training from the Philippine Army School Command (platoon leaders course) and Development Academy of the Philippines (career executive department program).

Lacson not yet giving up on Poe

By Norman Bordadora

DAVAO CITY—Despite launching their respective campaigns for the presidency, Sen. Panfilo Lacson has not given up on the possibility of joining rival Fernando Poe Jr. to defeat President Macapagal-Arroyo in the election.

"We both believe that the ideal situation to ensure the victory of the opposition is for us to unite," Lacson told reporters in Davao.

According to Lacson, who is running without a vice presidential candidate and a full senatorial slate, while talks continue, there is no concrete agreement yet.

He, however, stressed that while the line of communication remains open with the popular actor, there would be no compromise or concession.

Poe's popularity as an actor had helped him topped surveys in the past, followed by Ms Macapagal, former Sen. Raul Roco and Lacson.

The candidacies of Lacson and Poe had left a wide rift between their supporters within the opposition party Lakas.

No to show biz gimmick

Lacson said he would soon take a new tact to counter the surge of show biz influence in the national campaign by promoting his platform with a cheap yet potent medium—the video compact disc.

The campaign video, which is due for release in a couple of weeks, would be distributed to people's organizations, employers and managers supportive of Lacson and his platform of good governance and peace and order.

The target of the video, however, are the people under the scope of influence of the people's organizations and that of business leaders such as employees who somehow look up to them for political guidance and economic support, he said.

THE OPPOSITION tandem of Fernando Poe Jr. and Loren Legarda greet supporters in Baluiag, Bulacan, on the second day of their campaign.

EDWIN BACASMAS

GMA to FPJ: Not by bread alone

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

"MAN does not live by bread alone."

This was President Macapagal-Arroyo's retort to her closest rival, movie actor Fernando Poe Jr., who summed up the country's biggest problem as "breakfast, lunch and dinner."

In a speech at the 20th anniversary of the Independent Baptist Mission for Asians in Tarlac City yesterday, Ms Macapagal said putting food on every table has been her slogan since she run for public office, which is why the agriculture sector has been among the biggest beneficiaries of government spending in her administration.

But the President said three years in office have taught her that Filipinos need not only "food for the body but also food for the soul." Filipinos could realize their aspirations for adequate food, stable prices and jobs by creating a peaceful and orderly environment where businesses could thrive, she added.

"We will not have food on every table unless we get rid of the culture of corruption that has turned off investors," the President said. "They say we lack enforcement, that legislative reforms are not enough to make a dent. We need to have a change of heart and I want to do that for the next installment through education and the work of good people."

She also took a swipe at her presidential rivals for hitting her administration's anti-corruption efforts as having yielded insignificant results. "Fighting corruption is not like St. Michael slaying the dragon with one fell swoop. It is healing an infected wound through continuous cleansing and disinfecting," she said.

Still hurting, Nur Misuari backs jailer

By Cynthia D. Balana

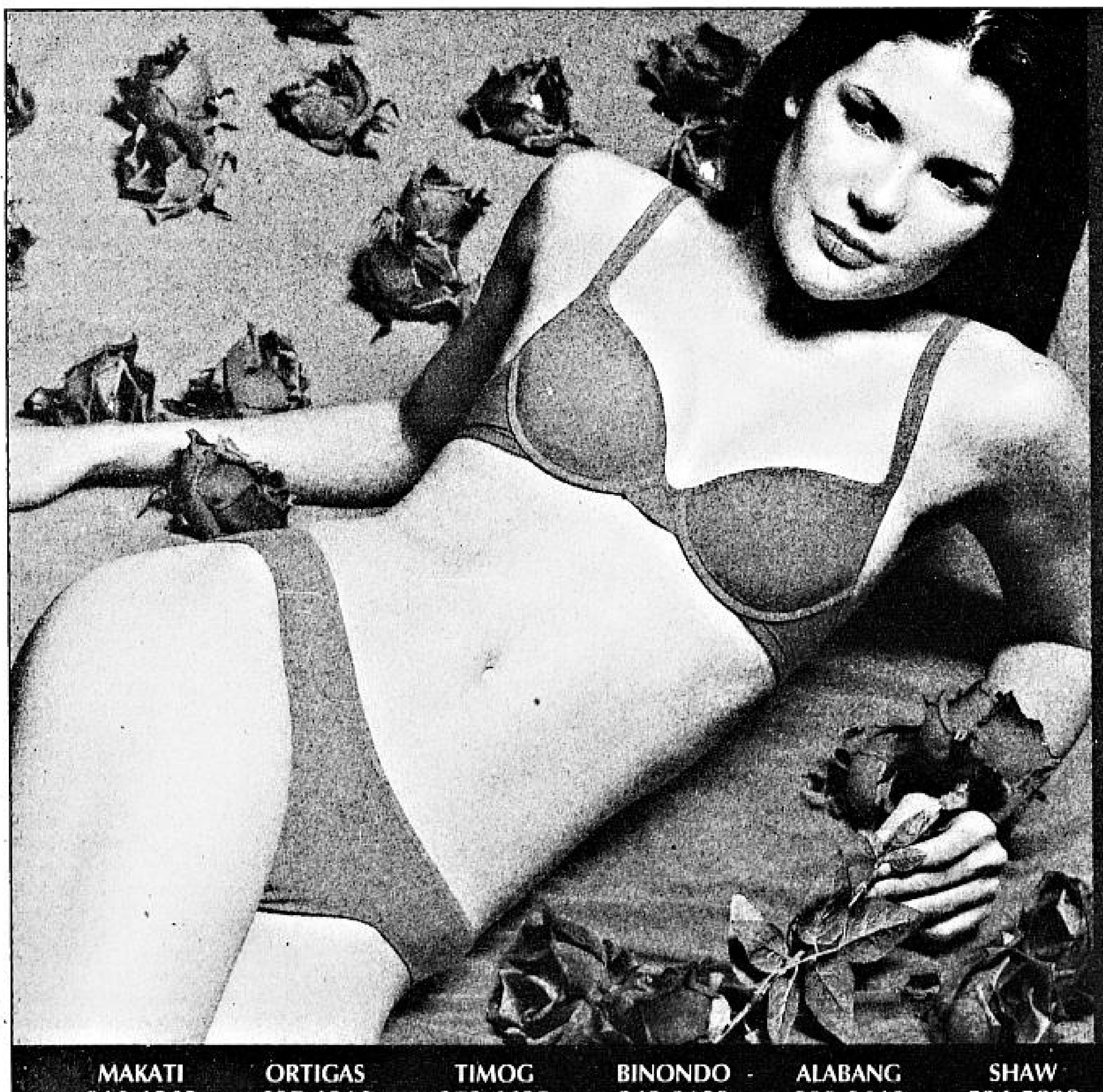
HE's still hurting. After all, she put him in jail.

No matter. Detained former Moro National Liberation Front chair Nur Misuari yesterday called on all Muslims to support President Macapagal-Arroyo's reelection bid "in spite of my incarceration and although I am hurting."

In a letter sent from prison titled "An Open Statement to Muslim Communities and to the Filipino people," Misuari said the MNLF is supporting the President based on his 10-point criteria for achieving peace and economic prosperity in Mindanao.

The statement was released following a visit from Speaker Jose de Venecia, president of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats party of the President, and Lakas national secretary adviser-designate Norberto Gonzalez who met the Muslim leader Tuesday in his cottage at Fort Sto. Domingo, Sta. Rosa, Laguna. Misuari has been in detention in the military camp since December 2001 for allegedly being the mastermind of terrorist attacks in Sulu and Zamboanga city involving former cadres of the MNLF. At that time, he was the governor of the Automous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

"I am for President Arroyo because she is genuinely reaching out to the Islamic world, leaders of Arab countries and the OIC member-states, and is trying her best to bridge the divide to bring greater understanding between cultures and religions," he said.



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9:00 - 12:00 NN
CEO Forum: Setting the Pace for Outsourcing
- Welcome Remarks - Usec. Gregory L. Domingo, DTI
- Keynote Speech - Sec. Cesar V. Purisima, DTI
- Lauro Vives, Vice President, META Group
- Paul Martin, Director for the Asia Pacific, Hewlett-Packard Managed Services Global Technology Solutions

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Animate Your Business (Part 1)
- Yasuhiro Imagawa, world-renowned writer, director, and producer of Japanese anime, "Mobile Fighter G Gundam" animated series

In cooperation with the Animation Council of the Philippines, Inc. (ACPI), the Embassy of Japan and the Japan Foundation

1:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Developing e-Services Hubs: Gearing up for Growth
- Karen Batungbacal, President, Contact Federation of the Philippines (CFP)
- Developing IT Hubs in Cebu, Calabarzon, Central Luzon, and Dumaguete

Day 2: 13 February 2004

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Transcribe Your Way to the U.S.
- Terry Peteete of DMC
- Elaine Olson, CEO, MT Resources LLP
- Dr. Peter Preziosi, Executive Director, American Association for Medical Transcription (AAMT)

In cooperation with the Medical Transcription Industry Association of the Phils., Inc. (MTIAPI)

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Animate Your Business (Part 2)
- Hans Bacher, Production Designer, former Disney feature film animator
- Regis Ghezelbash, President, RG Prince Films

In cooperation with the Animation Council of the Philippines, Inc. (ACPI) and the Embassy of France

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Developing Software for the World
- Michael Mudd, Asia Pacific Director Computer Technology Industry Association (CompTia)
- Liviano Lacchia, Principal, Headstrong
- Joey Gurango, CEO, Webworks OS
- Joanne Jill Olazo, Global Product Delivery Manager, Hewlett-Packard Services

In cooperation with the Philippine Software Industry Association, Inc. (PSIA)

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- **e-Services**
  - Animation
  - Business Process Outsourcing
  - Contact Center
  - Design Services, IT Solutions Strategy, and Project Management
  - Medical / Legal Transcription
  - Software Development
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Cops free kidnapped American

By Christian V. Esguerra

POLICE yesterday freed in Cavite an American businessman who was allegedly kidnapped and chained by his neck and feet for 22 days by a Singaporean abductor.

Alastair Joseph Onglingswan, 35, an American of Chinese descent, was rescued unharmed by members of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (Naktf) and Cavite police in a house in Bacoor.

A series of e-mails led the Naktf to the whereabouts of Onglingswan, who was allegedly seized by a Singaporean identified as George "Petrus" Yao last Jan. 20.

Authorities stormed Yao's safe house on the corner of Pointsenttia and Orchids streets in Camella Homes, Panapaan, Bacoor and found Onglingswan, according to Senior Supt. Ricardo Rosales, provincial director.

The alleged kidnapper was arrested and being interrogated by Naktf.

Dazed

Still looking dazed and sporting a thin beard, Onglingswan was presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo. He shook Ms Macapagal's hands and thanked her and others who worked to solve his Jan. 20 kidnapping, which wasn't reported until Wednesday.

"I have all my body parts. Glad to be here, really grateful and touched by the support of Filipinos and Americans," Onglingswan told reporters.

US Embassy spokesperson Karen Kelley welcomed Onglingswan's rescue, but did not provide other details.

"We can confirm that a US citizen, who has been kidnapped, was rescued this morning through the efforts of Philippine law enforcement," she said.

One-man gang

Officials were still trying to determine if Yao had companions in a group he called "The Professionals." But based on initial investigation, it appeared that Yao was the lone abductor.

Yao was alone when he induced Onglingswan to sleep, loaded the victim to a taxi and drove him to his Bacoor hideout, Rosales said. When he woke up, he was in handcuffs and chains on the neck.

At around 1 a.m. the following day, Onglingswan's New York-based girlfriend Iris Chau received an e-mail from a pseudonym used by Yao, demanding that she send US$5,000 to her boyfriend's Citybank account.

An hour later, Onglingswan's business partner Brenda Piquero got a text message from the victim's cellular phone, informing her that he had been abducted. She was also ordered to shell out P20,000 to cover the victim's daily expenses while in captivity. The amount was to be deposited to the bank account of a certain Ong Kwai Ping. *With reports from AP, AFP*

War games not linked to Spratlys row—GMA

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has assured neighbors that war games with United States forces later this month are unrelated to the Philippines' sovereignty claim to the disputed Spratly islands where a portion of the exercises are to be held, even as communist guerrillas threatened to attack US troops participating in the exercises if they stray into rebel zones.

"The arrival of US troops this month has nothing to do with the Spratlys issue which is being resolved through regional consensus and diplomacy," Ms Macapagal said in a statement.

About 2,300 Filipino soldiers and 2,500 troops will take part in the annual joint maneuvers called the Balikatan (Shoulder to Shoulder) from Feb. 23 to March 4 in the Spratlys, Batanes and Palawan and the provinces—Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Zambales and Cavite—that are the regular venues of the exercises.

The President stressed that the country's ties with Washington was an instrument of goodwill and not aggression.

"It is not aimed at any nation or foe," she said.

She said the Balikatan program was important to the Philippines' internal and external security as well as the global fight against terrorism because it has "contributed to the confidence of other nations in the Philippines."

'Imaginary threat'

"This strategic relationship with the US is important for political and economic security—serving peace and stability in the region and bringing peace of mind to every Filipino," she said.

Armed Forces spokesperson Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia said the war games would include an imaginary "conventional" security threat scenario in Palawan, the Philippine island that is closest to the disputed Spratly group in the South China Sea.

The Spratlys are claimed in whole or in part by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. Five of the claimants have garrisoned islands and reefs in the chain which guards key shipping routes and rich fishing grounds.

China has protested past military exercises near the Spratlys.

Garcia said the Palawan component of the war games only involve "command post exercises, including humanitarian assistance" and no actual ground military maneuvers or live fire exercises.

Civic projects

Officials said the Palawan portion would focus on computer-based exercises and civic projects: building schools, digging water wells and providing medical services.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye told a press briefing that the war exercises were in accordance with existing agreements and fall within the bounds of the Constitution.

Military officials said the exercises, launched under a 1951 defense treaty to prepare the longtime military allies for joint combat, are not part of any counterinsurgency operation and will not include a specific imaginary target.

However, communist rebel spokesman Gregorio Rosal said the exercise in Aurora province, where the guerrillas maintain a major front, could be a cover for a clandestine surveillance or anti-insurgency operation.

He said the rebels will attack US or Filipino soldiers if they stray into their lairs or provoke them.

"We will try to avoid trouble but we will be prepared. Anybody who would make provocative acts would be a target of tactical offensives," Rosal said.

Anti-terrorism

The annual exercises are aimed at dealing with external threats but would also involve anti-terrorism scenarios, said Balikatan director Brig. Gen. Rafael Romero.

The exercises, involving 46 American assault and transport aircraft, will bring US troops near security hotspots, including Dingalan Bay off Aurora province where the communist New People's Army guerrillas are active.

Romero said there is a plan for a beach landing exercise in Dingalan Bay. The area has been adequately secured, he said.

The leftist Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said holding the exercises near an NPA stronghold was an act of government insincerity and a blow to peace talks that opened Tuesday between the government and rebel negotiators in Norway.

Bayan accused Washington of projecting its power in Asia by deploying US troops in the Philippines, which has become "America's doormat in the region." *Gil C. Cabacungan and AP, AFP with a report from Volt Contreras*

DA sets up chicken checkpoints

By Volt Contreras

FEARING the entry of chicken that could be infected with bird flu, the Department of Agriculture (DA) yesterday dispatched monitoring teams to a remote group of islands at the tip of Palawan that reportedly serves as a "southern backdoor" for smuggled poultry.

Checkpoints to be manned round the clock have been set up by the DA's Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) in the Balabac chain to watch out for vessels that may be unloading unauthorized chicken imports. The move was in response to a warning raised by Palawan Rep. Abraham Mitra who noted the continuing informal trade of poultry from Sabah, Malaysia to the southern Palawan islands.

The congressman had warned that the avian flu virus might enter the country through this route, according to BAI Director Jose Molina, although Malaysia has yet to be infected with the virus. The checkpoints would also apply to the illegal entry of live pet birds and poultry eggs, he added.

The DA has been very cautious of chicken imports because the Philippines, along with Malaysia and Brunei, has been one of the three remaining Asian countries free of the avian influenza that has so far killed 19 people in Vietnam and Thailand and more than 50 million fowls.

In view of the bird flu scare, the DA has banned chicken imports from 10 Asian countries—Japan, Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, Pakistan, Laos, South Korea and China—and Delaware in the United States.

Meanwhile, a poultry growers association has urged the DA to get rid of close to 240 tons of smuggled chicken seized recently by authorities.

"Why are they keeping this cargo? This may have triggered a dip in our sales because consumers think the smuggled chicken may have found their way in the local market," said Philippine Association of Broiler Integrators Inc. (Pabi) spokesperson Ruben Pascual. If it is not immediately disposed of, this could be sold in the wet markets, he said.

The DA's Anti-Smuggling Task Force, so far, has impounded 12 reefer vans containing 20 tons of chicken parts that had no clearance from the BAI and the National Meat Inspection Administration.

On Monday, airport authorities destroyed more than 300 love birds imported from Europe after the shipment passed through Thailand. *With reports from Christine Gaylican, AP*

Boardwalk statue for Evelio Javier

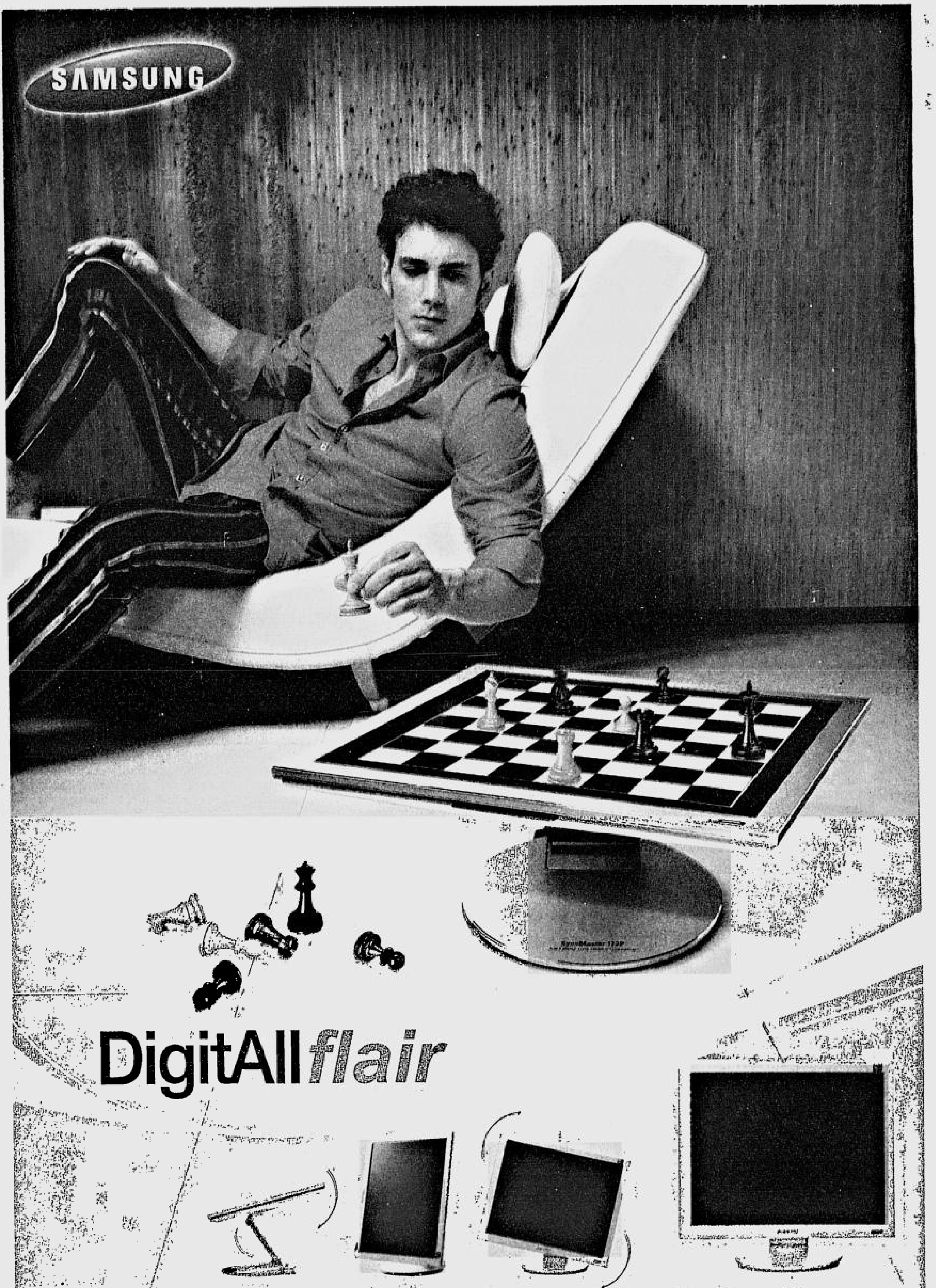
EIGHTEEN years after his death, the late Antique Gov. Evelio Javier, a staunch opponent of the Marcos dictatorship, was given recognition yesterday with the unveiling of his statue at the Roxas Boulevard Baywalk—beside the late Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, his good friend and fellow martyr in the cause of freedom and democracy.

The bronze statue of Javier, whose 18th death anniversary was commemorated yesterday, was unveiled at the Roxas Boulevard Baywalk. Like the one of Aquino that was unveiled on Aug. 21 last year, the statue of Javier was commissioned by the City of Manila and rendered by world-renowned Filipino sculptor Julie Dalena Lluch. It depicts Javier sitting on a park bench, with Aquino's statue to his left gesturing toward Manila Bay.

Leading the unveiling were Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, Javier's son Gideon, who was only 16 years old when his father was assassinated, former Sen. Eva Estrada Kalaw, Senate President Franklin Drilon and Mr. Luis Sison, chair of the Evelio Javier Foundation, and Manila Councilor Don Bagatsing. They were joined by DILG Secretary Jose Lina and Ambassador Enrique Zaldivar.

"This serves as a reminder to all of us of the true spirit of the Edsa People Power Revolt, the 18th anniversary of which we would soon be commemorating, and is also a fitting tribute to its genuine heroes. The assassination of Evelio Javier was one of the events that triggered that revolt against the dictatorship," Atienza declared.

Were it not for the inspiration provided by heroes like Ninoy Aquino and Evelio Javier, the country would probably still be under the control of a dictatorial regime, Atienza said.



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GMA names Sandigan chief to high court

From page A1

clined to identify.

Nazario headed the Sandiganbayan's special division, which the Supreme Court created to try Estrada on plunder and corruption charges. She assumed the post in November 2001 following the resignation of Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena.

Estrada said he was happy for Nazario.

"It's about time that she's promoted to the Supreme Court. We need competent justices like her. She rose from the ranks starting from the position of clerk of court," Estrada said in a phone patch interview with Sandiganbayan reporters.

Associate Justice Edilberto Sandoval has been named acting presiding justice of the Sandiganbayan.

SC spokesperson Ismael Khan Jr. dismissed allegations that Nazario's independence would be affected by the job of her husband, Rodolfo, with whom she has three children. Pacquiao is actively campaigning for Ms Macapagal, who is seeking a full-term in the May presidential election.

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"Assuming that is true, it will not interfere (in her work) in any way. Her untarnished and excellent record in the judiciary will speak for itself," Khan said of the newest member of the high court.

"She was one of those recommended by the JBC (Judicial and Bar Council) as a worthy addition to the Supreme Court. She has always shown independence of mind and legal probity in all her actuations. There is no reason to fear that she will not exhibit similar independence as a member of the court," he said.

Nazario takes pride in the fact that she has never been charged administratively or criminally in her 40 years of service in government.

She holds the distinction of being the first female presiding justice of the Sandiganbayan.

Fools

Nazario became famous when she scolded Estrada lawyer Alan Paguia in open court.

"*Ano kami? Gago?* (What do you take us for? Fools?)," Nazario told Paguia in public when he insisted that the Sandiganbayan include in its ruling his claim that Supreme Court justices colluded with then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in ousting Estrada during the Edsa II revolt.

The Supreme Court later suspended Paguia indefinitely from the law profession due to his continued tirades against the tribunal.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio lauded Malacañang's choice of Nazario.

"At present, there is no justice from the Sandiganbayan at the Supreme Court. Her presence there would mean that there would be equal distribution of justices in the high tribunal," said Villa-Ignacio, noting that members of the Court of Appeals are generally the ones appointed to the high court.

He denied allegations of a Palace-Nazario deal in Nazario's appointment to the high court, saying she was appointed to the high court because she's the most senior member of the Sandiganbayan and because of her long years in service.

Last December, private prosecutor Marichu Lambino said Nazario could have been influenced by the Palace into drafting the controversial Dec. 13 resolution allowing Estrada to go to the US for a knee replacement operation.

Lambino said Ms Macapagal wanted to "get rid" of Estrada by sending him to the United States to improve her chances of getting elected to a full six-year term.

Favor for favor

Nazario's resolution reversed the court's June 5, 2002 ruling that denied Estrada's motion to travel to the United States for the surgery.

"The turn of events between Gloria and Justice Nazario will give the appearance of a quid pro quo, something for something, favor for favor, injustice for ambition," Lambino said.

Associate Justices Teresita Leonardo-de Castro, Diosdado Peralta and Norberto Geraldez Sr. approved the resolution. Associate Justice Edilberto Sandoval dissented.

In the resolution, the Sandiganbayan cited Estrada's deteriorating health condition and the fact there was no "express provision of law" stopping Estrada's travel.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye was quick to douse speculation that the appointment was a reward for the Sandiganbayan decision.

Bunye said that the Judicial Bar Council had set very high standards for potential Supreme Court Justices .

He said Nazario was on the short list of possible replacement for Belosillo. Bunye said there were four others on the JBC short list but he did not identify them.

Reforms

Nazario instituted a number of reforms at the anti-graft court after she was appointed Sandiganbayan presiding justice on Feb. 26, 2003.

These included the revision of the anti-graft court's internal rules and the introduction of a welfare plan for court employees.

"I'm very happy that I was appointed presiding justice. This is my ultimate ambition, aside from, of course, if I'll be promoted to a higher office. But that depends on God's will," she said in a previous interview.

Under her leadership, the Sandiganbayan cleared its backlog of cases, except in the First Division.

Nazario signed a deal with the private firm Philamcare so that each Sandiganbayan employee would get hospitalization insurance worth P250,000 every year for a minimal monthly contribution of P50.

She put up a medical clinic and a dental clinic for employees. Nazario also arranged that retiring justices enjoy the option to buy their service car. Her predecessor as Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice, Francis Garchitorena, exercised this option.

She also pushed for the construction of the Sandiganbayan office in Baguio. She was set to sign a memorandum of agreement with the Presidential Management Staff for the allotment of more than 7,000 sq. m. in Dominican Hills as the future site of the anti-graft court's office in the country's summer capital.

PDI FILE PHOTO

MINITA CHICO-NAZARIO was praying the novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help when she got the good news.

Classmates

Nazario finished law at the University of the Philippines in 1962 along with Reynato Puno, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, and Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez--now all Supreme Court justices.

She began her work in government as the social secretary of former Justice Secretary Juan Liwag from 1962 to 1963. She later worked as a clerk at the City Fiscal's Office in Manila and as legal researcher and special deputy clerk of court of the Court of First Instance, Branch III in Pasay City.

In May 1973, she transferred from the Department of Justice to the Supreme Court Judicial Reports and Statistics Division. From 1974 to 1977, she was a judicial assistant, detailed to the Court's Management and Technical Division. From 1977 to 1979, she served as senior judicial assistant to then Chief Justice Fred Ruiz Castro.

In 1981, Nazario joined the Sandiganbayan as first division clerk of court. From 1987 to 1993, she served as regional trial court judge of Branch 25 in Biñan, Laguna.

Nazario, who was admitted to the New York State Bar in 1988, was the criminal law examiner in the 2000 Bar exams. A native of San Miguel, Bulacan, she was voted vice president of the Women Judges Association in 2001.

With a report by Gil Cabacungan Jr.

Novo Ecijano first Filipino bishop in US

From page A1

Named to the post by Pope John Paul II last December, Solis will head the archdiocese's coordinating council focusing on minority issues.

Three thousand people, including 700 priests, packed the new cathedral for the ordination. Thirty bishops from the Philippines and the United States were also present, along with Philippine Ambassador to the United States Alberto del Rosario, Consul General Marciano Paynor and Nueva Ecija Gov. Tomas Joson III.

Mahony opened the ordination by greeting the assembly in Filipino. *"Mabuhay sa inyong lahat,"* he told the assembly, which included Buddhist monks, Jewish leaders and representatives from different denominations who sat in the front pews.

Pandango sa Ilaw

The readings and hymns were said alternately in English, Spanish and Filipino. A group of Filipino-Americans in various Filipino native costumes danced the "Pandango Sa Ilaw" during the procession, which included representatives from different nations in their native costumes. About 100 singers of various nationalities sang Father Fruto L. Ramirez's "Purihin ang Panginoon."

In his homily based on a reading from Luke in which Jesus told Simon Peter to become a catcher of men, Mahony exhorted Solis to "lower your nets" and become the "minister of harmony" and an "instrument of reconciliation" in Los Angeles.

After his ordination, Solis walked around the cathedral as the assembly roundly applauded him and while the choir sang "Te Deum."

'Office of love'

In his address, Solis thanked Pope John Paul II who appointed him to an "office of love" and asked the assembly to pray for his success.

He then switched to Filipino to address his countrymen: *"Ang araw na ito ay mahalaga sa atin. Ito ay isang dakilang tawag na nagbibigay karangalan sa ating lahi upang ang ating kultura ay higit na maging bahagi ng simbahan dito sa Amerika. Buong galak akong bumabati sa lahat ng ating kababayang Pilipino. Mabuhay!"*

Solis, a graduate of Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay City, also thanked his former parishioners from Louisiana who flew all the way to Los Angeles to witness the ordination of their former pastor.

He was mobbed by well-wishers when he stepped out of the cathedral for a reception at the plaza.

In a daze

"I was in a daze . . . The Holy Spirit really inspired me and I feel so blessed," Solis told the INQUIRER after the ceremony.

It is a great responsibility. It is challenging and exciting but with God's grace, we'll be able to do the mission," he added.

Nellie Eustaquio, who has lived in America for 36 years, said she was "very lucky to be a part of this historical event."

"I felt that, as a Filipino, our never-ending prayers and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary for so many long years did not go in vain. Our prayers are answered. We are blessed that in our lifetime we experienced the feeling of having our very own bishop. As a Filipino born and raised in Albay, I'm very proud to be a member of this Catholic faith community," she said.

Wonderful, energizing

Grace de Leon, a Filipino nun from Masinloc, Zambales, who is the national vocation director of the Columban Sisters in the United States, described the ceremony as "wonderful, beautiful, and energizing."

"Watching the ceremony made me start wishing for more Filipinos to become priests and missionaries," she said.

Maria Remedios de Leon, who was part of a contingent from Nueva Ecija, told the INQUIRER, "I was touched. I am so glad to see a Filipino priest ordained as a bishop in the States."

Father Angel Gammad, who was Solis' classmate at the UST Central Seminary, described Solis as a compassionate "who has the heart of a pastor and a bishop."

Unexpected

"I liked the way he joked with us when we were seminarians," he said. "His being a Filipino is his strength. A Filipino is a flexible person. He (Solis) can deal with all kinds of people and that's the kind of bishop we need."

Gammad said none of his fellow seminarians expected Solis to become a bishop. "Bishop Solis himself never expected this. So the appointment of the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II was a big surprise for him and for all of us, his friends."

Background

The son of Antonia Ortega Azarcon and Anselmo de la Fuente Solis, Solis has three sisters and one surviving brother, Ronald Solis, who is a priest in Hong Kong.

He finished his grade school education at the San Jose West Elementary School and graduated from high school at the Maria Assumpta Seminary in Cabanatuan City.

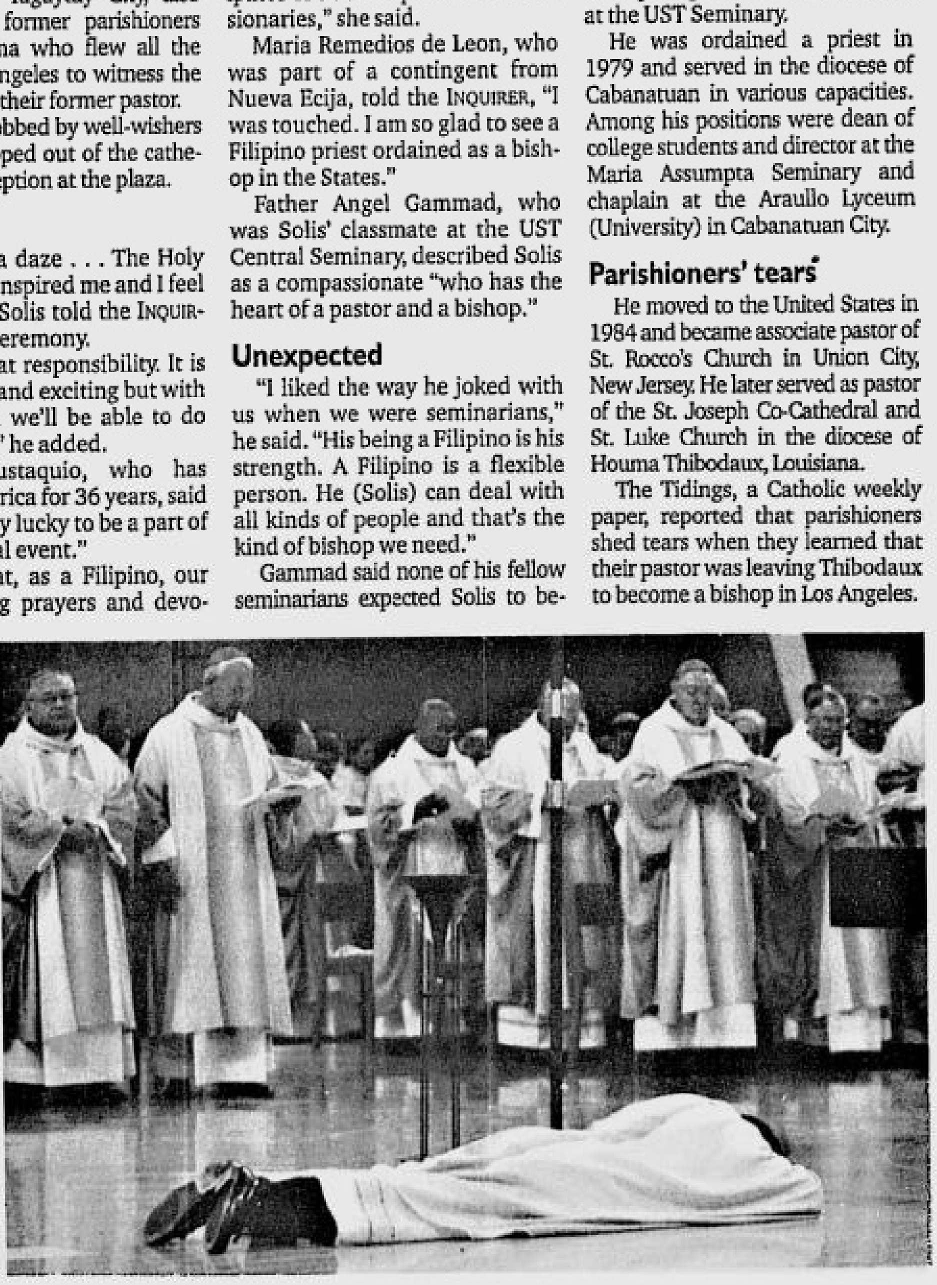
After graduating with BA degrees from the Divine Word Seminary and the UST Seminary, he took post-graduate studies, also at the UST Seminary.

He was ordained a priest in 1979 and served in the diocese of Cabanatuan in various capacities. Among his positions were dean of college students and director at the Maria Assumpta Seminary and chaplain at the Araullo Lyceum (University) in Cabanatuan City.

Parishioners' tears

He moved to the United States in 1984 and became associate pastor of St. Rocco's Church in Union City, New Jersey. He later served as pastor of the St. Joseph Co-Cathedral and St. Luke Church in the diocese of Houma Thibodaux, Louisiana.

The Tidings, a Catholic weekly paper, reported that parishioners shed tears when they learned that their pastor was leaving Thibodaux to become a bishop in Los Angeles.



SOLIS has been assigned to head the LA archdiocese's coordinating council focusing on minority issues. AP

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Mindanao development key to Asean peace–KL

By Isagani Yambot
Publisher

KUALA LUMPUR—Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi Tuesday said Malaysia was prepared to help in the economic development of Mindanao to bring about peace in the troubled Asean region.

In an interview with editors and publishers of the Asia News Network, Badawi said peace talks were not enough to resolve the Mindanao problem.

"That area [Mindanao] needs development and the people feel sidelined," he said.

"[Helping] neighbors prosper is very good for us," Badawi said. "I want to pursue the 'Prosper Thy Neighbor' policy initiated by Dr. Mahathir. If all [in Southeast Asia] are doing well, no one will get a heartache. If neighbors are not well, we will get sleepless nights."

Badawi, who recently visited Asean countries, said he noticed "a strong commitment to Asean."

"We are beginning to see Asean as a group that is well integrated," he said. "We must ensure that Asean develops its own market." The Asean grouping covers about a billion people in the most populous area of the world.

He recalled that former President Fidel V. Ramos once told then Prime Minister Mohammed Mahathir and himself that he wanted Malaysia to invest in Mindanao.

Badawi reject any form of extremism, whether religious or ethnic.

"If extremism leads to terrorism, we can't accept [that]," he said. "We say that Islam does not promote terrorism or extremism but moderation and peace."

Badawi promised to crack down on government corruption even if it causes a political backlash.

Badawi, who took over the prime minister's post from Dr. Mahathir, said he did not want to compare his achievements with those of Mahathir.

"I don't benchmark myself against Dr. Mahathir," he said. "I benchmark myself against what I am expected to deliver."

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NBN 4 coverage of GMA hit

THE PARTY-LIST group Sanlakas yesterday questioned the use of the government-run network NBN 4 in the campaign coverage of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the administration ticket for vice president and senators to the detriment of other presidential candidates.

Sanlakas Rep. Wilson Fortaleza said what was supposed to be a simple signing into law ceremony of the Optical Media bill turned out to be a circus of sorts of the administration candidates for the May 2004 elections.

Fortaleza accused the President of deceiving the people by using the signing ceremony which turned out to be a campaign sortie that was televised nationally at the National Arts Center in Los Baños, Laguna.

The event was aired live over NBN 4 for more than an hour and showed the President and her running mate, Sen. Noli de Castro, along with the entire senatorial slate of K-4, against the backdrop of their numerous posters.

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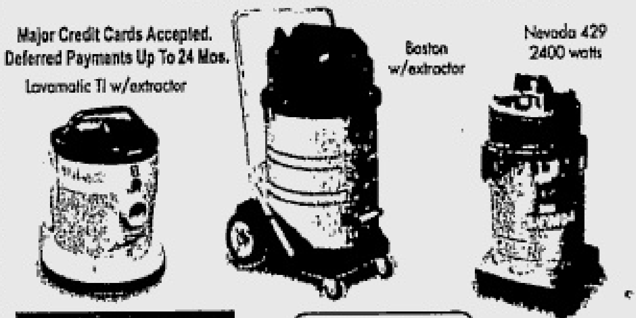

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Roco demands respect from GMA camp

By TJ Burgonio

RAUL Roco is demanding respect from the administration camp, which he is accusing of spreading disinformation that Sen. Noli de Castro had quit in his favor as President Macapagal-Arroyo's running mate.

Roco said the disinformation supposedly spread by Ms Macapagal's campaign handlers in Mindanao was designed to discredit him and break the morale of his Alyansa ng Pag-asa ticket.

"Out of respect for human beings, you should not tell lies about them. We demand respect. And if the President can't find in herself to respect others, well, that's too bad. She should not be elected," he told reporters Tuesday in Mandaluyong City.

Roco described the propaganda as "duplicitous," noting that while it sowed intrigue about De Castro, it insinuated that he was sliding down from presidential candidate to be Ms Macapagal's running mate.

"They're sowing intrigue about their [vice presidential candidate] but they're denying it," he said. "They're trying to demoralize the [Alyansa] people."

"But we'll continue the fight. The candidates of the Alyansa ng Pag-asa are very courageous," he added.

Michael Defensor, Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson, had earlier dismissed reports that De Castro quit the K-4 coalition to give way to Roco. He said these were being peddled by the President's political rivals.

But Roco had been quick to say that the reports came from the President's own camp to sow confusion in his ticket.

Asked Tuesday what he would do if the President tried to talk to him, he said: "I'm a polite person ... I talk to the tricycle driver, janitor, security guard. Why shouldn't I talk to the President? But [not] if the results of such a civility will be transformed into propaganda."

He recalled that over the weekend, former Rep. Venice Agana tried to reach him in a bid to set up a dialogue between him and Ms Macapagal, but to no avail.

Roco hits Biazon betrayal; K-4 offer of ₱30M deplored

From page A1

Lakas-CMD and other parties to form the K-4.

According to Roco, Biazon was offered P30 million to transfer to K-4. "He even said that on radio," Roco said, adding that he did not know whether the senator accepted the offer.

Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor yesterday denied that K-4 had paid Biazon P30 million to join her team.

"That is totally unfair to Biazon," Defensor said. He said it was Senators Franklin Drilon and Francis Pangilinan who convinced their fellow LP members to join the K-4.

Independent

Biazon himself said he was free to join the administration coalition because he had been "independent" since the very beginning.

"I was independent when I joined [Roco]," he said yesterday when reached by phone in Tarlac, where the K-4 ticket was campaigning.

He said Roco had known all along that he did not intend to join the Alyansa. He maintained that he was independent until he joined the LP on Jan. 3, at a time, he said, when he "did not know whom to support—GMA or Roco."

Biazon said he had told Roco that he would go for the LP's candidate, "and the LP supported GMA."

He said he had to join her ticket after getting an assurance that Lakas would support his five points of advocacy (reforms in the Armed Forces, review of the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade, housing, creation of a P10-billion cooperative capital development fund, and reproductive health).

"I was looking for a political [group] that could push and realize my five advocacies," he said. "I found it in the LP, which eventually coalesced with Lakas."

Biazon said the other reason for his leaving Roco's camp was "personality difference."

"And I'm not going to talk about it because Senator Roco knows about it, unless he provokes me to say it in public," Biazon said. "Let's stick to issues. Roco knows why; I told him I was leaving."

Never

Over dinner with the INQUIRER, Roco declared that he would never agree to run as Ms Macapagal's running mate.

Asked if he would consider the idea of a GMA-Roco tandem, he quickly said: "I'll ask her to be my running mate."

He said only divine intervention could force him to slide down to the No. 2 slot.

He also said that he was a constant subject of surveillance by Malacañang, and that he was prepared for the worst.

"Who cares [if they monitor me]?" he said. "They've been doing that all along."

No money from taipans

Roco admitted that his Alyansa had received no donations from the taipans.

"We have not received anything [from them]," he said. "Not one of them."

And he knows why: "Because I keep saying that unless it becomes a people's campaign," we will never have social change.

BIAZON: I was independent. JESS YUSON

RAUL ROCO'S return to his home province on Wednesday with members of his Senate slate starts with prayers at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Naga City. From left, Melanio Mauricio, Perfecto Yasay, Bong Coo, Herminio Aquino. Flanking Roco are wife Sonia and mother Rosario. ERIK ARAZAS

The taipans have "much vested interest in the establishment" and "cannot now afford to have a fellow like Roco who is hard-headed," he said. "Because why should the establishment support somebody who keeps saying, 'We must change'?"

Told that with his stance, he was in effect provoking the establishment, Roco said that in running without the backing of big business, he was challenging not just established norms in elections but the very system that had supposedly ruled the country since 1946.

He said the bottom line was that the taipans were actually afraid of change, and that they would rather deal with an abusive and corrupt government than face major changes with a new administration.

"Why, will there be social change by continuing with Gloria? Impossible," Roco said.

Continuity vs change

"And one thing is clear: People want change," he added. "Because if people want continuity ... for what? The drop in the peso? Continuity in the commission [of corrupt practices]? It [will eventually result in] a paralysis [of the nation]."

Roco said that if there would not be an end to patronage politics, then "let's give the Philippines to the taipans."

"And reality must yield," he said. "If you want to change the republic, it must start. And we must stop thinking that it's the taipans and money that will determine elections."

He admitted, however, that Alyansa would have difficulty bankrolling a nationwide campaign to woo about 40 million voters and guarding 350,000 voting precincts.

"But all the things that are hard, if they are worth doing, should be done," he said.

He also underscored the vital role of a fair media in elections "if democracy must survive."

Controlling the farmhouse

Roco said that without real support from the people for a presidential candidate and other national leaders, "we should be happy to consign ourselves with whatever or whoever wins."

"We'll demonstrate that," he said. "We will dedicate this campaign to the youth and to the poor. It is the contest today."

He quoted Napoleon Bonaparte to drive home his point: "He who controls the farmhouse controls the battle. The farmhouse in this contest is the young. Whoever is supported by the young will eventually win the battle."

GMA unelectable

Roco also said Ms Macapagal was unelectable.

"One of the reasons they're making propaganda that I will move out is they want me to move out before Fernando Poe Jr. is disqualified," he said. "Then it becomes an easy fight. Because from where we sit, the only way she can win is if Fernando Poe Jr. and Raul Roco are out." *With a report from Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

Gil vows to pay nat'l debt but can't pay his own bills

From page A1

Police refused to let Gil and his party leave the VIP Hotel after a check he issued to pay his bill at a restaurant bounced.

Joy Sayson, cashier of restaurant Barangay Manok, rushed to the VIP Hotel to confront Gil after informing the police about the check.

Gil's party, which included his running mate Elizabeth Samson, had treated supporters at the restaurant and incurred a bill of about P27,000.

Complicating Gil's problem was another complaint, this time from the hotel management, that he also failed to settle his bills.

Insp. Celso Montil, Cogon police precinct commander, told the INQUIRER that when the police received the complaint, they immediately sought Gil, a businessman.

The police found the businessman and his five other companions trying to get out of the hotel by passing through the kitchen, according to Montil.

The kitchen staff helped prevent Gil, standard-bearer of the Partido Isang Bansa Isang Diwa (Pibid), and his companions from leaving.

Montil said the police would hold Gil and his party until after their debts had been paid.

As of 5 p.m. yesterday, the VIP Hotel management said Gil had already paid his hotel bills. It was not clear if the payment was made in cash.

Gil and his companions, however, remained in the hotel as of press time.

Drivers unpaid

During his proclamation rally at the Mindanao Polytechnic College in Barangay Lapasan here on Tuesday evening, Gil also ran into trouble when some jeepney and van drivers prevented him from leaving the area.

To appease the drivers, Gil issued checks amounting to P450,000 for the 50 vehicles and 20 motorcycles he hired from different parts of Mindanao.

GIL REUTERS

Aliodin Pacuto, chair of the Mindanao Association of Youth for Unity and Service, told the INQUIRER that he and 15 members of his delegation from North Upi in Maguindanao earlier left the Marawi Resort Hotel without paying bills totaling P21,000.

"We were forced to stay at the resort because we knew no one in Marawi. We are Maguindanaoans and we were only directed to pass by Marawi and when we arrived there, we were informed there were changes in the plan and we needed to stay in Marawi," Pacuto said.

He said his group left their belongings at the resort so that the management would allow them to leave.

Pacuto said Gil might not be able to help his group and that they had nobody to turn to.

Blames media

"Gil has been telling us that the media are very careful in handling him because he could sequester any media outlet. He said he was very rich and powerful," Pacuto said.

Samson said Gil would not settle bills considered as ghost expenses. She did not elaborate.

In a later interview with Bombo Radyo, Samson blamed the media for causing the mess her group found itself in.

"There are some members of the media here who are disgruntled because we did not give in to their demands," she said.

Jerry Orcullo, Cagayan de Oro Press Club president, was furious and said Samson should apologize for her remarks.

Dragon economy

In a statement released by his political party, Gil said at a rally that if elected president, he would turn the country into Asia's new dragon economy, and ensure a comfortable living for every citizen.

Gil, who claims to have amassed wealth through his high-yield investments in a number of foreign banks in about three decades, said he could attain the goal by settling first the national debt of more than P5.20 trillion.

He said he and his top advisers had drawn up "a master plan for a sustainable growth guaranteed to rebuild the nation." Under this plan, Mindanao will be transformed into the country's "bread basket."

To pay national debt

He reiterated the challenge he hurled against his five rivals for the presidency on the payment of the national debt.

Gil said he was inviting them to sign an agreement stating that whoever was able to pay off the entire national debt first would be declared the winner.

He said the agreement would require Congress to declare the next president with the affirmation of the Supreme Court.

At the rally, Gil presented Pibid's senatorial candidates who spoke for about 15 minutes each. They were retried Gen. Ramon Montaño, former Sen. Eddie Ilarde, lawyer El Cid Marcos Fajardo, movie actress Pilar Pilapil, Eloida Cuneta Belmonte, Usop Matuan, Jose Floro Crisologo, Dr. Arturo Estuita, lawyer Iderlina Pagunuran, Ismael Aparri, Pendatun Decampong and Gerardo del Mundo.

Abat fumes; 25th death rites for son canceled

From page A1

tion last week of a ceremony to mark the 25th death anniversary of his son. He said he was to have delivered remarks at the ceremony scheduled at Camp Lt. Tito Abat, named after his son, in Manaoag, Pangasinan.

"Maybe they feared that I would influence the soldiers if I give a speech. Instead of preventing me from going there, they could just have requested me not to talk about the elections," he said, adding that he had been virtually prevented from exercising his right to express himself.

The former defense secretary was active in the movement to oust then President Joseph Estrada and install then Vice President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang. He has lately been critical of the Macapagal administration and has called for a "no elections" scenario to revise the Constitution and establish a parliamentary form of government.

Abat said he and his family were on their way to the camp on Feb. 2 when Army officials informed him that the ceremony had been canceled because of a double red alert status raised as a result of an alleged threat of the New People's Army to attack a nearby telecommunications facility.

Gag order from higher-ups

He said Army insiders later told him that the cancellation had been ordered by higher authorities.

Abat said that he called the camp commander and Lt. Gen. Efren Abu, commanding general of the Army, and that both confirmed the cancellation order had come from higher-ups. He said he tried to reach AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya but failed.

Reporters caught up with Abaya yesterday and asked him to comment. But he said: "It would be unfair to comment before I read the statement of General Abat."

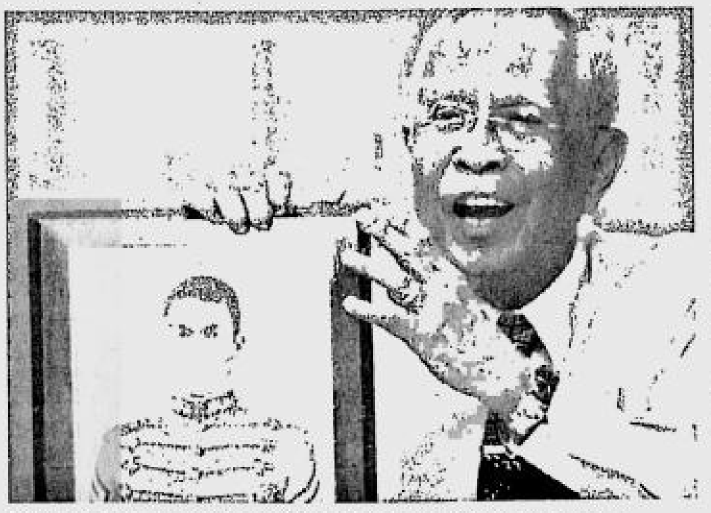
Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, chief of the AFP Public Information Office, is out of the country.

'Insecure, paranoid'

Abat said the military leadership was afraid that he would make a political speech or statement during the ceremony.

He said the "gag order" prevented him from observing his son's death anniversary, and showed that AFP officials were "insecure, paranoid, not to mention oppressive."

"What kind of a government do we have that deprives a father the right to commemorate his fallen son's death anniversary?" Abat said. *"Masakit sa loob yan* (That really hurts). My son died for the people and for the country. I never considered him a hero, but just the same he died in the line of duty. He was killed in action, and this hurts me very much."



BANNED from entering a military camp in Manaoag, Pangasinan, named after his son, Lt. Tito Abat, former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat holds a press conference in Quezon City to let off steam. JOAN BONDOC

The young Abat died in an encounter with communist insurgents in Sta. Rita, Eastern Samar, on Feb. 2, 1979. At that time, his father was commanding general of the Army.

Camp Lt. Tito Abat is the headquarters of the Army's 54th Engineering Brigade. It also serves as a training facility for reservists.

'Lying through their teeth'

Abat said he had intended to set aside politics in his remarks and simply talk about his son's sacrifice for the country.

He said military officials had to "lie through their teeth in coming up with lame excuses" for keeping him out of the ceremony.

He also pointed out that the problem of insurgency in the provinces was being handled by the Philippine National Police, and not by the AFP.

Bicolano journalist shot dead in mouth

From page A1

waiting for someone. We thought they were just waiting for a companion," said a witness, who requested anonymity for security reasons.

"Later we heard successive gunshots, and that's it. We saw him lying on the ground."

The witness said the gunmen even had breakfast at a makeshift food stall, a few meters from the crime scene.

Other residents said that since last month, they had already seen men whom they suspected to be monitoring the movements of Endrinal.

"Our neighbors kept on warning him about the presence of these people, but he just ignored it. *Basta raw huwag lang papasok sa bakuran namin* (So long as they do not enter our yard)," the victim's wife Mina recalled.

Part of job

She also disclosed that her husband had been receiving death threats lately. "There were text messages in his cell phone the past few days, saying he would be killed, but he ignored the warnings and said these were part of the job."

Endrinal was known as the No. 1 critic of Albay Gov. Al Francis Bichara as he had been throwing tirades at the official over alleged corruption and personal activities.

"A day before the incident, somebody called and informed him that the governor was filing a libel case against him," Mina said.

Bichara denial

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Bichara vehemently denied any involvement in the killing.

"Actually, he [Endrinal] was the one who quarreled with me and I was not responding to his criticisms because I was not the only one being hit by him," he said.

"I condole with the family though, and I condemn this gruesome killing," he said.

Bichara admitted that he had consulted his lawyer and gathered evidence to file a libel case against the radioman. "If I had a plan against him, I didn't have to file a case," he said.

Other local politicians had also become subjects of his commentaries, either over his daily block-time radio program or in his articles in local newspapers. Edrinal was the publisher of the Bicol Metro News and Ang Bicolano Ngayon.

"I believe the incident had something to do with his job, and it was meant to silence him because he was shot in his mouth," Mina said.

Mina said she was hoping that justice would be served at the soonest possible time and the perpetrators put behind bars.

RUEL ENDRINAL aka "Mr. Guapo" in Legaspi City ignored warnings about the presence of shady characters in his neighborhood.

Supt. Eriberto Olitoquit, city police chief, said a deeper investigation of the case was already being conducted. Chief Supt. Jaime Lasar, Bicol police director, also ordered the creation of Task Force Guwapo to handle the probe.

Attack on radio station

In Tandag City, two reporters suffered injuries from window glass splinters when masked men attacked radio station dxRM. They were identified as Nilo Enderes and Rogelio Binas.

Malaza, the station manager and commentator who claimed that he was the target of the attack, was not hurt. At that time, he was staying in a room on the first floor of the two-story building.

It was the second attack on Malaza. On Feb. 14 last year, two motorcycle-riding men shot and nearly killed him.

Malaza immediately linked Gov. Vicente Pimentel Jr. and his brother, Tandag Vice Mayor Alexander Pimentel, to the attack.

"In recent days, I have been lambasting the Pimentels and their cohorts on the air for their irregularities in the government, so there could be no other persons who would dare attack me but them," Malaza told the INQUIRER.

Governor's denial

The governor denied having a hand in the shooting.

"It was a cheap attempt of Malaza to ruin my candidacy for governor and to bolster the bid of his ally, Mating Tan, who is also running for the same position," Pimentel told the INQUIRER.

He said he had asked his lawyer, Andrei Andresan, to sue Malaza for libel "for his unfounded and malicious outbursts."

Insp. Galo Martinez, acting city police chief, said investigators recovered at least 10 bullet shells from an Uzi 9-mm automatic pistol and a bullet shell from an M-16 rifle at the scene of the crime.

51st slain journalist

Endrinal was the 51st journalist killed in the country since 1986, when a "people power" revolution toppled late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, including seven last year, INQUIRER records show.

According to the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, a media watchdog, he was the 44th victim.

He was the fifth radioman slain in Bicol. In December of last year, Nelson Nadura of Masbate was killed in an ambush by suspected New People's Army rebels. Two years ago, veteran Albay broadcaster John Villanueva Jr. of radio dzGB was also shot dead and until now, the case has remained unsolved.

Mediamen in Bicol immediately condemned the latest killing.

"I was shocked and alarmed by this incident. The series of killings of media practitioners in our place is no longer a joke. It only goes to show that media people here are no longer safe," Johnny Dematera, a broadcaster of radio station dzGB and a friend of Endrinal's told the INQUIRER.

"We consider it as a direct attack on the freedom of the press. We strongly demand the immediate solution to Endrinal's murder so that justice could be given to him and his grieving family soonest," said the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas, Albay-Legazpi Press Association Inc. and Endrinal's Prensa-Bicol in a statement.

In a statement, presidential candidate Raul Roco condemned Endrinal's killing, saying that the assailants and their masterminds "must be brought to justice as soon as possible."

"The cycle of violence against Filipino journalists—against freedom of speech—must be brought to a stop by a government that is better able to enforce the rule of law in the Philippines," Roco said. *With a report from Bert Pacate, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Man killed 24 days after wife died

From page A1

one German and the Norwegian captain of the ship.

Gerardo Cave's death is another blow to the couple's three children, ages 2 to 5, who are in their grandmothers' care.

"What really happened is very sad because we just got back from Norway," said Marife Cave's mother, Renie Dojillo, who traveled to Norway with her son-in-law.

Antonio Ibuna of Sta. Elena police ruled out robbery as a motive, saying the victims' mobile phones and other belongings were intact.

He said Cave and his nephew, Joseph, were driving last Friday when they were shot dead by four men following them in another vehicle.

Both victims were found still strapped to their seats in Cave's black Honda, which was riddled with bullets. Cave died from eight gunshot wounds, mostly in the face and head, while Joseph suffered four wounds also in the head. They died on the spot.

"We have a very, very good lead on the case," said Chief Supt. Jaime Lazar, the regional police chief.

Olive Chin, assistant vice president of the ship's operator, Jebsen Management, said Cave had received his wife's wages, but like other victims' relatives, had not been paid a settlement.

The Department of Labor and Employment earlier disclosed that the employer will give $60,000 to the family of each victims in insurance and death benefits, plus $15,000 for each child left behind. This is on top of P200,000 in benefits from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

All in all, Cave was likely to receive a total of around P6 million from Marife's death.

"Whoever they are, they really wanted him dead. If it was for the money, they can be sure that Gerry had not received anything yet," a cousin said, adding that there have been suspicious characters surveying Cave's wake.

"He was a very good man. He worked quietly. He supported his wife and had no vices even when they were apart," another relative said.

Feeling lost

Cousins close to him said Cave has been "feeling lost" after Marife's death was confirmed. He and Marife wanted to move in their own house when her contract was over, but their dreams sank with the MV Rocknes.

Cave was also a seaman who worked as deck officer for a ship whose crew is deployed by Aboitiz-Jebsen. He, however, decided to stay in the country so his wife Marife, a licensed fourth engineer, could have shipboard experience for two years and achieve her dream of becoming chief engineer.

Cave and his wife Marife, who was three years his junior, are both graduates of the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy. He took up engineering at the Technological Institute of the Philippines for two years before applying in the nautical school. Cave dreamed of joining the Philippine Navy, but he and his wife decided against it because of the children.

Cave used to teach at PMMA but quit recently to put up a training school for seamen in Manila. He was also a consultant of ISO in the Philippines.

His two older children, aged six and four, are with Marife's parents in Muntinlupa City while the youngest, aged three, is with Cave's mother in Daet. *With reports from AP and AFP*

Pinoys No. 1 in romancing cell phone

From page A1

According to the Siemens Mobile Lifestyle Survey conducted in nine Asia-Pacific countries and completed in December 2003, 54 percent of Filipinos surveyed called and sent text messages to loved ones, not just once or twice, but several times a day.

The second most romantic people are the Indonesians at 42 percent, followed by Indians at 40 percent, mainland Chinese at 34 percent, Malaysians at 27 percent, Hong Kong residents at 24 percent, and Australians at 23 percent.

Bordering on nonchalance with a phone-toting population of less than 20 percent, are the Taiwanese with 19 percent and the Thais with 13 percent.

Pinoys also topped the list of people who can barely live without their handsets.

Around 65 percent admitted they would immediately go home if they discovered they left their phones.

Roughly 50 percent of those surveyed from eight other countries said they would do the same thing.

And do these other discoveries ring a bell?

- Pinoys are more likely to check their mobile phones for calls or messages even if there was no indication that a call or a text message came in. And get this: If Pinoys do not get a text message for a period of time, 77 percent said they would constantly check their phones, as if willing them to produce a message.
- Pinoys, particularly women, tend to save "cherished" text messages from their loved ones long after they've been sent. Around 85 percent of women and 80 percent of men keep old messages in their mobile phones' in-box, so they can read and re-read these sweet nothings.
- Pinoys are more likely to shell out cash to send multimedia messaging service (MMS) messages to their significant others. They are also fond of taking and sending their photographs.
- Like the hit song of Parokya ni Edgar, Pinoys are Mr. and Ms. Suave when it comes to their cell phones. Only 8 percent said they "talked dirty" with their loved ones on their mobiles.

Dirty talk

In contrast, the mainland Chinese and the Taiwanese just love to "talk dirty" tying at 31 percent, followed by Hong Kong residents at 18 percent, Indians at 17 percent, and Australians at 10 percent.

The Siemens survey is conducted annually by the German handset manufacturer to discover the cellular phone habits and behavior of mobile handset owners in nine Asia-Pacific countries.

This year's survey was performed by Synovate for China and GFK Marketing Services for the rest of the countries.

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Twin suicide attacks kill 100 in Iraq

BAGHDAD— A suicide attacker Wednesday blew up a car packed with explosives in a crowd of hundreds of Iraqis waiting outside an army recruiting center in Baghdad, killing up to 47 people, officials and witnesses said, in the second bombing in two days targeting Iraqis working with the American-led coalition.

The attack, which occurred a day after a suicide bombing against a police station south of Baghdad that killed up to 53 people, fueled warnings that insurgents are stepping up violence to disrupt the planned June 30 handover of power to the Iraqis.

"This could be... part of the ongoing pattern of intimidation we've seen of late," Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, the military's deputy operations chief in Baghdad, said in an e-mail interview. "We have stated numerous times that in the lead-up to governance, there could be an uptick in the violence."

Col. Ralph Baker of the 1st Armored Division said there was no immediate indication who was behind Wednesday's attack, but he said it resembled "the operating technique" of al-Qaida or Ansar al-Islam, a radical Muslim group linked to Osama bin Laden's terror network.

The 7:25 a.m. blast tore into would-be army volunteers waiting outside the recruitment center less than two km from the heavily fortified green zone, where the US administration has its headquarters. Baker said a man driving a white 1991 Oldsmobile Cutlass Sierra detonated about 135 to 225 kg of explosives.

Casualty reports varied. Maj. John Frisbie, spokesperson of the 2nd Brigade 1st Armored Division, put the death toll at 36. Iraq's deputy interior minister, Ahmed Ibrahim, said 47 people were killed and 50 injured. He told reporters "this crime" will "not deter the people's march toward freedom." One hospital counted at least 37 bodies, while another reported one more.

Charred debris from the vehicle was scattered across the road in front of the center as a heavy rain soaked troops and FBI agents looking for evidence at the blast scene.

The recruitment center was surrounded by barbed wire and had sandbagged posts in front of it. But around 300 Iraqis were gathered outside the center's locked gates, waiting for it to open, and were completely exposed. Some of them were lined up to join the military and others waiting to depart for a training camp in Jordan.

"I was just telling my buddy that it was very dangerous to be standing here," said Ali Hussein, 22, who was lined up with the others. He lay on a bed soaked in his blood at Karkh Hospital, his body shaking as he gasped for air. He said he saw a white Oldsmobile approaching the crowd. "Then I felt nothing but fire around me." His legs were covered in bandages, and he had broken bones. *AP*

Kerry wins 2 more states; Clark quits

FAIRFAX, Virginia—His front-runner status bolstered by dual Southern victories, John Kerry is looking to Wisconsin to dispatch the dwindling field of Democratic presidential rivals still clinging to hope.

Kerry's strong victories in Virginia and Tennessee on Tuesday chased one Southern-bred rival from the race. Wesley Clark of Arkansas ended his bid after dismal third-place showings, while runner-up John Edwards of North Carolina said he would not quit.

As his remaining rivals scrambled for a last-ditch strategy to stop him in Wisconsin, Kerry retreated to his Washington home for two days of rest. He returns to the campaign trail Friday with stops in Wisconsin, which holds a primary next Tuesday, and Nevada, which holds caucuses on Saturday.

Kerry pledged to take it "one step at a time," first clinching the nomination and then targeting President George W. Bush. But he spoke like a front-runner Tuesday night, focusing more than half of his victory speech on the president.

"George Bush, who speaks of strength, has made America weaker—weaker economically, weaker in our health care, weaker in education. And the truth is that he has made us weaker militarily by overextending the armed forces of the United States," Kerry said.

Howard Dean, once the race's high-flying front-runner, finished in single digits in Virginia and Tennessee, having skipped both states to campaign in Wisconsin.

"There's a big election next Tuesday," Dean told teenagers at a youth center in Milwaukee. "And if I win, I've got a good chance of being president. If I don't win, then maybe I won't be president." *AP*

US SOLDIERS survey the damaged police station in the town of Iskandariya. Up to 53 people were killed and dozens wounded when a car bomb ripped through the police station south of Baghdad on Tuesday, witnesses and doctors said. REUTERS

UN warns of humanitarian crisis in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE—The United Nations warned Tuesday that a "major humanitarian crisis" is looming in Haiti.

"The insecurity and violence make us fear a major humanitarian crisis," said Elisabeth Byrs, spokesperson for the UN humanitarian coordinator in Geneva.

Byrs warned that the fighting was holding up food deliveries around Gonaives. "The villages in the north are those that have been most affected by hunger and are the poorest," she said.

Haitian police retook three towns from rebels battling President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and the government pledged to win back control of all territory lost during battles that have left at least 42 dead in five days.

The US state department on Tuesday urged Americans to leave Haiti "if they can do so safely."

"We will do what we must to restore order without harming the population," said Haitian Public Safety Minister Jean-Gerard Dubreuil. He claimed rebels had used civilians as human shields in Gonaives, the first city taken by the armed opposition.

Police forces took back the towns of Grand Goave, St Marc and Dondon after sometimes fierce battles on Monday, media reports said.

Prime Minister Yvon Neptune went to Grand-Goave, where a supporter of the ruling Lavalas party was killed, and St. Marc. In both towns there was fighting between supporters and opponents of Aristide and in St. Marc between rival opposition groups, reports said.

At least two people were wounded in Dondon where police were helped by armed supporters of the government to regained control of the town.

Armed local insurgents took over about a dozen towns after rebels took up opposition demands that Aristide stand down and attacked the main police station in Gonaives.

However, rebels that now call themselves the National Reconstruction and Liberation Front said they were determined to fight to "liberate" the whole country.

"The Haitian revolution is on the march," rebel spokesperson Winter Etienne said in a statement. "We have decided to no longer live in despair. We will regain our hope for the future."

The troubles were causing wider hardship in the north. Power has been cut since Monday in Cap-Haitien, Haiti's second city, and no cars were on the streets Tuesday as there was no gasoline.

Several informal lottery stands and a restaurant belonging to presumed anti-government activists were burned by armed men as well as a police station in the town of Bassin Bleu.

In Port-au-Prince, two people were wounded in gunfire after a group opened fire seeking revenge for the killing Sunday of a police officer who was close to them.

One opposition leader Andre Apaid blamed Aristide for the violence, calling him "a dictator and a despot." *AFP*

Al-Qaida seen planning major strike

BERLIN—Al-Qaida is under pressure to strike another "high-value" Western target and may be looking at attacking chemical plants or shooting down planes with surface-to-air missiles, a top German intelligence official said on Tuesday.

"A substantial decline in activities in the next couple of years is highly improbable," Rudolf Adam, deputy head of German's BND foreign intelligence agency, told a security conference in Berlin.

"On the contrary, we would feel that pressure is mounting on al-Qaida to reassert its effectiveness and its ability to strike another really big high-value target" in order to keep its "trade name" visible, he said.

Al-Qaida, blamed for the Sept. 11 attacks on US cities in 2001, has not succeeded in striking the West again since. But it or its affiliates have been held responsible for a series of attacks elsewhere, including in Indonesia, Morocco, Turkey, Kenya, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Adam said air transport remained a potential target, adding:

"The next threat that we observe with great concern is the possibilities of shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles, so called MANPADs."

Two such missiles narrowly missed an Israeli airliner taking off from the Kenyan port of Mombasa in November 2002, in an operation attributed to al-Qaida. They have also been used by insurgents in Iraq.

Adam said shipping, tourist sites and supply infrastructure such as oil pipelines, power stations, electricity grids and water supplies remained potentially at risk.

"We have unspecified hints that plans have been made or are still under way to target the chemical industry and chemical infrastructure," he said, without giving details. *Reuters*

A VIDEO grab image shows emergency workers surrounding the wreckage of a plane crash near Sharjah in the Gulf state of the United Arab Emirates. At least 43 people were killed as an Iranian Kish Airline plane with 46 people on board crashed near Sharjah on Tuesday. REUTERS

Bush National Guard records bared

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush was absent for long periods of his final two years of National Guard duty but met service requirements, according to new records cited by the White House in an effort to refute accusations he shirked Vietnam War-era military obligations.

"These documents clearly show that the president fulfilled his duties," White House spokesperson Scott McClellan said on Tuesday during a contentious press briefing as he sought to quell a controversy over whether Bush skipped Guard duty.

The issue has sidetracked the Bush team as his reelection effort gets under way.

McClellan said the White House learned on Monday that pay and service records had been found that documented Bush's service as an F-102 jet pilot in the Texas Air National Guard, which is part of the US part-time military system.

"He (Bush) completed his military obligation in a satisfactory manner," retired Air Force Lt. Col. Albert Lloyd, a personnel specialist, said in a written description of the records that was also issued by the White House.

Although the records, some of which had been previously released, were not fully legible, Lloyd said they reflected that Bush earned the required number of service points.

The documents show long gaps in Bush's Guard service, from May through late October 1972, and mid-January through early April 1973.

Bush spent part of the fall of 1972 working on a political campaign in Alabama, but he performed "equivalent duty" while out of Texas, McClellan said. *Reuters*

BIRD FLU UPDATES

Countries stockpile antivirals

BEIJING—South Korea and New Zealand announced plans Wednesday to boost stocks of antiviral medicine to gird against Asia's bird flu as China moved to keep homing pigeons—potential virus carriers—out of the skies. The United States, meanwhile, grappled with fallout from its own milder outbreak.

With the human death toll from bird flu in Asia standing at 19, Laos said Wednesday it had slaughtered more than 40,000 chickens to forestall the disease —adding to the tens of millions already dead across the region from prevention efforts and from the flu itself.

South Korea said it would stockpile medical equipment and enough antivirus solution for 1 million people and anti-influenza vaccines for 250,000 people as a precaution.

The plans don't include a vaccine for the current strain of bird flu in Asia—which hasn't been developed yet—but officials hope existing vaccines for other strains can afford limited protection.

South Korea's poultry farms have been hit with the virus but no human cases have been reported there. *AP*

80 US farms quarantined, 72,000 chickens killed

DOVER, Delaware—Officials took swift action after the second case of bird flu was found in Delaware, ordering the slaughter of 72,000 more chickens and the quarantine of 80 farms as they tried to avert more international bans on a billion-dollar export industry.

The chickens were from a commercial flock in northern Sussex County and were killed Tuesday afternoon, said Delaware Secretary of Agriculture Michael Scuse.

Perdue Farms said it destroyed the chickens to prevent the spread of the disease and the flock was believed to have been infected by nearby chickens raised for the New York City live markets.

The disease was first found on a farm in Delaware's southern Kent County operated by an independent grower. State officials immediately ordered the slaughter of 12,000 birds.

About 80 farms in a 10-km radius of the two farms will be quarantined for at least 30 days, state officials said. Scuse said chickens over 21 days old will be tested every 10 days during the quarantine.

"This now is a very, very serious matter. We have a multibillion-dollar industry at stake," Scuse said.

Seven nations, including some of America's largest export customers, have banned at least some poultry imports from the United States because of the bird flu cases.

Annual poultry exports total more than $1.7 billion, about $1.4 billion of it in shipments of broiler chicken. Countries that have banned US imports, including China and Japan, imported at least $245 million in US broiler chicken in the past 11 months, said David Harvey, an agriculture department economist.

If the avian influenza does not spread, the impact of the bans could be short-lived, said Richard Lobb, a spokesperson for the National Chicken Council, a producers and processors trade group.

But US officials must show the world that they have the disease properly diagnosed and are eradicating it, Lobb said.

No recalls have been ordered, agriculture officials said. The sale or the movement of chickens by large poultry companies has not been stopped, Scuse said.

Delaware officials have said the outbreaks are not related to the virulent variety of avian influenza that is blamed for the deaths of at least 19 people in Vietnam and Thailand. The Asian bird flu also forced the slaughter of an estimated 50 million birds as authorities in the stricken countries worked to rein in the spread of the contagious disease. *AP*

Opec cuts oil production

ALGIERS—Opec's unexpected, two-pronged strategy for stabilizing prices—curbing excess production of crude and also trimming its members' output quotas by 1 million barrels a day—could end up costing consumers more to fill up their cars and heat their homes, analysts say.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed Tuesday to reduce output to try to keep oil prices stable when warmer weather erodes demand in the United States and other major importing countries. The combined cuts, if effective, would squeeze Opec's actual production by as much as 10 percent, or 2.5 million barrels a day.

"What this means is that consumers are going to carry on paying loads of money for their gasoline for quite some time," said Jan Stuart of Fimat USA, a New York brokerage.

Opec has often urged its members to comply better with their agreed quotas, but its decision to make an additional cut, effective April 1, in its official target of 24.5 million barrels surprised energy markets. Oil ministers from the group said they believed their action would send a strong signal about Opec's willingness to take a hands-on approach to managing oil supplies.

"Everybody will know that the organization is serious, and we would like to have a stable market," said Libya's representative, Abdulhafid Mahmoud Zlitni, speaking after Opec delegates ratified their output decision in the Algerian capital, Algiers. *AP*

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SINCE 1950

Over 1,300 priests accused of sex abuse

NEW YORK—The scope of sex abuse accusations against Roman Catholic clergy since 1950 appears to be much greater than previously estimated by victims' groups and the media, an Associated Press review of reports from dioceses has found.

The US church will make an unprecedented, nationwide accounting of abuse claims and costs later this month, and some bishops already have started releasing local figures.

The AP contacted dioceses across the country and found that 1,341 clergy members have been accused of molesting minors, with more than half the dioceses yet to report.

"What it's really doing is showing us in black and white that the problem is much worse than any of us thought," said Sue Archibald, president of The Linkup, a Kentucky-based victim advocacy group.

Statistics have yet to be released by some archdioceses that have faced hundreds of allegations, including Boston and Los Angeles.

A January 2003 review by The New York Times counted 1,205 accused priests nationwide over five decades. Survivors First, an advocacy group compiling its own list from media reports and lawsuits, has counted 1,800. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

US restores ties with Libya

LONDON—The United States, responding to Libya's change of heart on banned weapons, has restored its diplomatic presence in Tripoli after decades of hostility, Libyan and US officials said on Tuesday. "Yes, Americans came to Libya to work inside the Belgian Embassy in the US interests section in Libya and Libyans will go to America to work in the Libyan interests section there," Libyan Foreign Minister Mohamed Abderrhmane Chalgam told a news conference in London. US state department spokesperson Richard Boucher confirmed a diplomat had returned to the Libyan capital and said he also expected Libyan diplomats to set up in Washington. "For the first time now in a long time, we've got an American officer who's been assigned to Tripoli," he told reporters. *Reuters*

Nuke scientists warned

ISLAMABAD—Warnings from fellow scientists about the father of Pakistan's nuclear program and his ostentatious wealth raised suspicions Abdul Qadeer Khan was selling weapons technology abroad years before the government was compelled to take action against him, officials said Tuesday. Scientists who worked in Pakistan's covert program to build a nuclear deterrent against rival India had warned the government even before its first bomb test in 1998 that Khan was involved in suspect activity, a government official said on condition of anonymity. The official's comments revealed that Pakistan had internal information about the suspect activities of Khan. *AP*

Candidate resurfaces

MOSCOW—The Russian presidential candidate reported missing last week answered one question in the political mystery when he turned up at a snowy Moscow airport—he was alive. But he gave few clues to the other queries swirling around his case. Why had Ivan Rybkin gone to Ukraine? Why hadn't he told his wife or campaign staff? Would he try to mount a credible campaign after all this? Rybkin, a longshot liberal challenger to President Vladimir Putin, phoned campaign manager Kseniya Ponomaryova on Tuesday to say he was in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine. He said he'd gone there to relax for a few days and would return that night to Moscow's Domodedovo Airport. Instead, he arrived at Moscow's Sheremetyevo-1 airport and in brief comments to reporters, he said nothing about going to Kiev for a break. *AP*

Windows' vulnerability

SEATTLE/SAN FRANCISCO—Microsoft Corp. said on Tuesday a "critical" flaw in most versions of its flagship Windows operating system could allow hackers to break into personal computers and snoop on sensitive data. Although no computers were reported to have been compromised, the world's largest software maker warned that Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows XP and Windows Server 2003 were at risk. Microsoft announced the flaw in its monthly security bulletin. The company offered software updates to fix the software flaw, which it assigned its most severe rating of "critical." "It does affect all (current) versions of Windows," said Stephen Toulouse, security program manager for Microsoft's Security Response Center. "We're not aware of anyone affected by this at this time." *Reuters*

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That's entertainment

EDITORIAL

SONG and dance literally marked the launch of the election campaign, or at least those of two major players for No. 1, indicating the unchanging tenor of the battle for the vote (the unseemly sight years ago of then senatorial candidate Leticia Ramos-Shahani going through the motions of a cha-cha onstage suddenly comes to mind). That the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino chose the show-biz mode is hardly surprising, given the stature of its standard-bearer, Fernando Poe Jr., in the celluloid world. But with K-4 taking the same tack, hauling its own bevy of sexy dancers presumably to balance off the other camp's, it should be obvious that President Macapagal-Arroyo and her handlers intend to milk the entertainment factor to the max, down to the bumps and grinds.

Should we now expect the "high road," which the President constantly invokes, to be festooned by the baubles, bangles and beads of show biz? (Not that, the annoyed observer could point out, it is not already.)

Of course, the difference between the two major players ("major" here to mean primarily an abundance of resources as suggested by Tuesday's hoopla) is and continues to be evident: Poe literally a man of few words, relying for projection on his own star quality and that of his gang (as well as statements on programs issued by his media bureau), and the President naturally gabby and equipped with the flair for the peculiar sing-song tone taken by show-biz denizens, and making full use of the equity of the incumbent. Between them and their respective handlers and tickets—a mishmash of Marcos-era veterans, former TV news readers and fading action-movie heroes—the public received sufficient indication of the extravaganzas sure to characterize the days ahead.

Contrast this with Raul Roco's "flower power," aimed at giggling schoolchildren yet unable to vote, and the V formation of the Alyansa ng Pag-asa ticket, supposedly to symbolize an arrow. These project a departure from the stock gimmicks, giving flesh to Roco's expressed determination to conduct a campaign "out of the box" and to present as its focus, not the "glitter" of mass popularity that commands screaming crowds, not the trimmings of comedy and confetti, not the drama of destitute fathers kneeling as though before a queen to beg for alms, but a platform of governance.

Roco's candidacy, as projected by the Alyansa's no-frills foray on Tuesday to a metropolitan university, a wet market, a shopping mall and an urban poor community, in fact raises a provocative idea in Philippine politics: the possibility of winning an election on the sheer basis of platform, even without the now-required massive resources and—most significant—the obligatory song and dance. (The man posed the same idea in 1998, but it had yet to acquire the sharper edge that marks it today.)

It's a profound question that the strategists of Poe's Koalisyon (which enjoys the formidable support of much of the show-biz elite) and the President's K-4 (which, by its very name, partakes of the crucial entertainment factor) appear to have already answered.

On the other hand, Panfilo Lacson's motorcade to his native Cavite would have been as simple a campaign kickoff if the penny-pinching observer ignores the make and number of the vehicles, as well as the gasoline costs. Lacson and his faction in the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino also pointedly did away with the old show-biz trick, the better, presumably, to highlight the candidate's projection as apart from the traditional politics that he once famously professed to abhor.

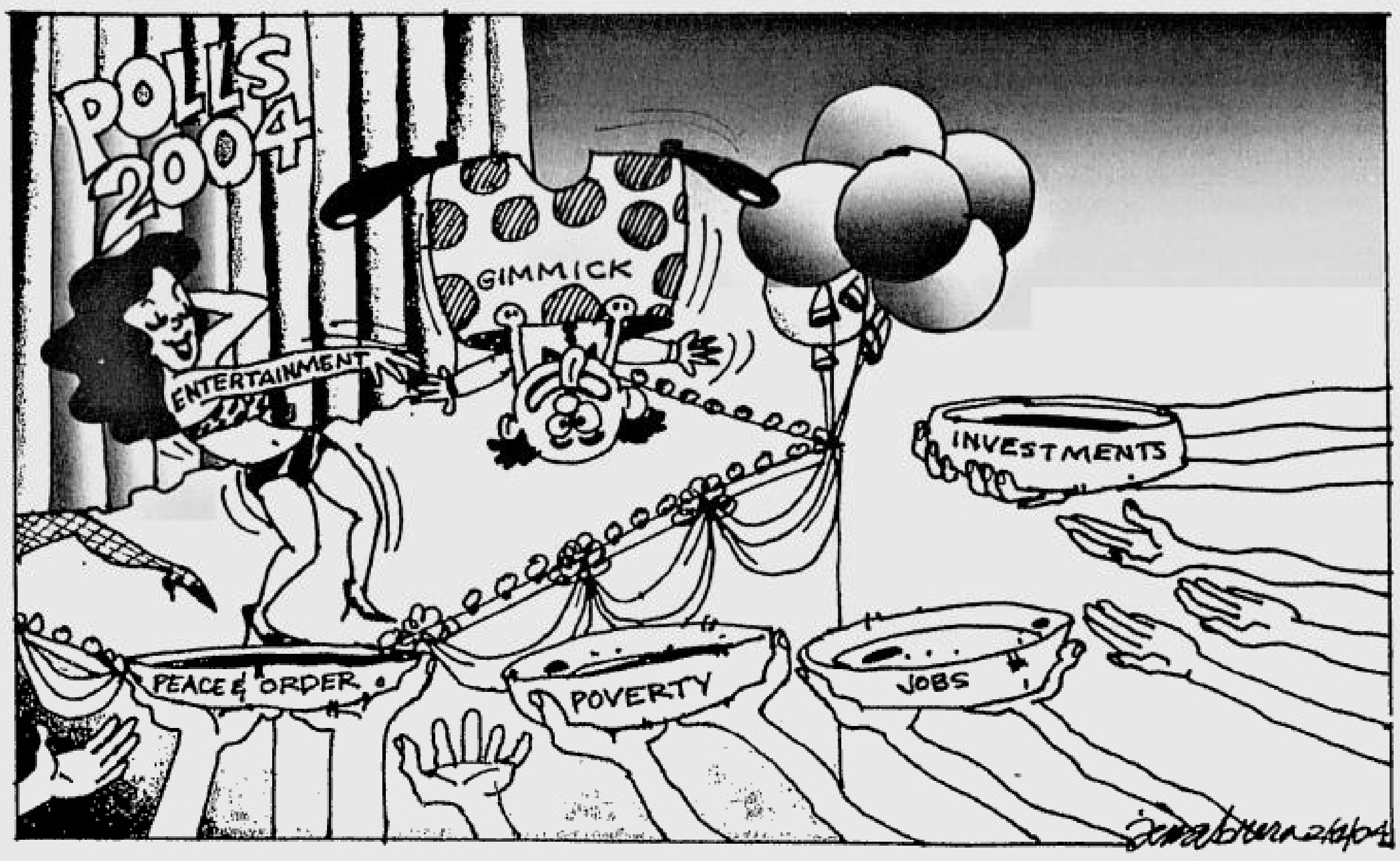
But Lacson and his group, breaking bread and touching base with the common folk of Cavite and partaking of the reputed "warrior" quality of its men, did not exactly shun a critical factor in political image-making—the star power of members of the province's political elite. A cursory examination of their names would show that political dynasties are hardly on the road to extinction.

Narrow interests

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE DEBATE under way now in the United States and Britain about the intelligence role in both countries in identifying the threat posed by Saddam's Iraq... is the strongest indication that the political decision made by Washington to wage the war was not accurate. President Bush... surprised everyone by saying that (after the war) America was safer, Iraq was better off and the world more stable. He thus focused on the results of the war and not on the accuracy of the political decision.

So what drove Bush to war? Most likely, the narrow political calculations of White House hawks to control and build the American Empire, calculations that are known and understood only by them and not anyone else. *Al-Ahram (Cairo, Egypt)*



'Silent movie' campaign

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

IN TODAY'S campaigns, are we back-pedaling to the "silent movies"?

Watch Fernando Poe Jr. Whenever "Da King" brushes up against unscripted questions, he performs like one of the stars in by-gone mute films: Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, Buster Keaton, Clara Bow—and Felix the Cat.

How do we stabilize the peso? Pained look. UN Millennium Development Goals? Huh? Views on al-Qaida? Head wags. Erap pardon? Shades on, pursed lips. And so on.

Emoting feelings from A to B (all right, up to C then) is not policy.

FPJ pledges to barnstorm in provinces with a "parade of stars." Do prancing entertainers constitute a development program?

Thus, many undecided voters wonder if reality panics FPJ. They're sure, however, a cram tutorial by faceless UP professors will not qualify anybody for the country's toughest job.

FPJ may not like it, but the competence issue refuses to go away. The "vague uneasiness" INQUIRER columnist Randy David noted has in fact deepened into concern. The jokes reflect that. "If Ping Lacson or FPJ wins," a TV show caller asked, "which country will you migrate to?"

So do the questions you hear. "Do you think FPJ will measure up to the job?" asked the specialist peering into my ear.

"Doctor, would I ask your driver to sit where you are?" I mumbled.

Many, however, have settled, in their minds, the capability issue. My wife has. "If Poe can be president," she tells me, "you can be an actor."

"Ronnie Poe does not know the difference...between the real world and the reel world," prize-winning director Behn Cervantes declared at the "When Life Becomes A Movie" forum in UP-Cebu.

Competence is the litmus test, Cervantes added. "If Poe and Noli (de Castro) win, we'll have in the Senate Jinggoy (Estrada), Jaworski, Lito (Lapid) and Bong Revilla. What will then follow? Joey Marquez, Richard Gomez and Kris Aquino?"

The prospect of an inadequate president, dumping problems on unaccountable advisers, jacks up the "Scare Quotient." It's aggravated by People Power discards, now jelling into "Da King's" court: Juan Ponce Enrile, Francisco Tatad, Tessie Aquino-Oreta and Vicente Sotto, Ernesto Maceda ("so young, so handsome—and so expletive deleted") and "Jingle Bells" Estrada, necklaced by pending graft charges.

"Never before did one man marshal, in so short a time, so many talented cut-throats," the Cebu Daily News observed. "FPJ accomplished that without uttering a word in public."

Campaign debates throw light on critical national issues. That's what the din from Iowa, New Hampshire and Washington is about. South Indian action star M. G. Ramachandran, Ronald Reagan and Arnold Schwarznegger spoke up on the campaign trail.

Not Poe. He conducts a zippered-lip campaign. It's an expedient device to prevent PR fiascoes. And it's "succeeding." He hasn't repeated earlier incoherent interviews.

In the process, however, Poe denies citizens information on policies, programs and his capabilities. Citizens have a right to that data. An accurate head count of kids, sired out of wedlock, falls short of that duty.

"To succeed in other trades, capacity must be shown," Mark Twain once wrote. "In (politics) concealment is enough."

"Da King's" campaign places a premium on induced ignorance. It is also a throwback to the silent movies, first "exhibited in a theater in Escolta, two days after Rizal was shot at Bagumbayan," historians tell us.

But how long can FPJ get people to agree to Trappist monk-like silence and suspend disbelief? Until May 10? Then, what?

Dolphy's reply remains a classic : "*Madaling tumakbo, ang mahirap e kung manalo.*" Since then, *barkadahan* has proved thicker than common sense. Dolphy now stumps for "Da King."

In his paper "Illusions of a Cinematic President," then UP Department of Arts Studies chair Patrick Flores asserted that FPJ's icon, Joseph Estrada, stumbled "across an epiphany in the politics of disbelieving."

Erap "crossed the divide between theater and society," Flores wrote in Public Policy quarterly. But his pro-poor catchwords "no longer rang true" when seen alongside his policies, favoring new cronies (Atong Ang, Jaime Dichaves, Dante Tan, Mark Jimenez et al.)

"As president, he took pains in hiding the hand of the elite in weaving the fiction of his populism," Flores wrote. But "the audience's suspension of disbelief was no longer able to hold the waters."

Filipinos marked a centennial of movie watching by electing an unqualified actor president. "But what comes next?" Flores asked at that time. "The denouement bears watching."

The surprise ending was not in the script. People Power II erupted. And when the lights came on, an actor-president was in the slammer.

Somewhere in "Da King's" campaign is a denouement that also bears watching .

* * *

Comments are welcome at juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph

Logic 102

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

"DECLARATION of Faith" is how the movie actors, directors and producers call their full-page ad which came out in the INQUIRER last Tuesday. Some of the signatories are good friends of mine. But I cannot go along with them, or their views.

The ad says the signatories believe ardently in freedom of expression, which has been strangled by "self-anointed betters." They are exponents of movies that serve as "the true mirror of the state of our society." "We do not do political double-speak, we look at ourselves without flinching, and thus describe the real threats to this country's integrity."

The signatories see the need for a new leadership, one "strong enough to resist being waylaid by political obligations, powerfully able to inspire." That leadership is offered by Da King.

In more than four decades as captain of the movie industry, Fernando Poe Jr. has shown the stuff he is made of. He has been belittled as a mere movie star, but he understands the ordinary Filipino better than any other candidate. "He is no liar. He is not capable of deception. He does not make promises he cannot keep. His vision: To unite the country, against all odds."

I agree entirely with the premise. Freedom of expression is a wonderful thing. I myself have had cause to fulminate against Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for stifling it. Not just with her decision to go along with Jaime Cardinal Sin and Bishop Socrates Villegas in declaring "Live Show" unworthy of the eyes of the faithful but with her decision to clamp down on human rights and civil liberties in the name of fighting terrorism. We must defend freedom of expression with all the ferocity we can muster.

But why on earth should that mean installing FPJ in Malacañang? That makes as much sense as putting any one of the so-called "nuisance candidates" in charge of fighting poverty because he is poor. The latter probably makes more sense.

I agree: Movies should be a true mirror of the state of our society. But not with the opposite proposition, that real life should be a true mirror of the state of movies in our society. I am particularly astounded that some of our serious actors and directors, the people who are making movies that expose the *esteros* of society, should seek to spread their stench. If you looked at yourselves unflinchingly, people, you will see how supremely ironic—no, monumentally ludicrous—your position is. At the very least because none of Da King's movies lives up to the gritty realism or unflagging idealism you uphold or try to live up to. But more than that, because you propagate the deception that what FPJ is in the movies he is so in life.

I myself am tempted to make a movie about serious movie-makers seriously carrying out the silly task of making themselves and the people believe their messiah in the movies is their messiah in life. Something along the lines of Mephisto. It should reverberate with all sorts of meanings about lie and truth, fantasy and reality.

FPJ does not lie? He is not capable of deception?

I recall that he was asked around the middle of last year if he was running for president. He replied, "*Hindi pa ko nasisiraan ng bait.*" (I haven't lost my mind yet.) Dolphy, one of the signatories to this "Declaration," said his *kumpare* wasn't running, and he would be first to discourage him if he did. Years earlier, the King of Philippine Comedy had shown kingly wisdom by saying, "*Madaling tumakbo, ang mahirap e kung manalo?*" (It's easy to run, but the problem is, what if I win?) So what happened? He didn't see that what applied to the King of Comedy applied as well to the King of Action?

Technically, of course, that isn't lying, that isn't deceiving. FPJ did not say he wasn't going to run, he just said he hadn't lost his mind yet. Well, now he has. So have his colleagues.

I for one am not belittling FPJ for being a movie star. I am belittling him for being a movie star who wants to become president. I would belittle as well a politician who wants to act in a movie, or worse direct it, who has absolutely no idea what it takes to make a movie. I cannot imagine anyone of the directors who are party to this nonsense making Jose de Venecia or Franklin Drilon the leads in their comedies. Or, well, maybe they should—they might finally turn out funny comedies. Loren Legarda and Nikki Coseteng did appear in movies at one point, and look how they fared. As it is, they probably acted better in those movies than FPJ would act as president of this country.

As to uniting the country, I already said something about that in previous columns. There is a difference between drawing patronage and drawing support, between separating fools from their money and separating chaff from grain, between diverting audiences for a couple of hours and uniting a people for a couple of decades. The signatories to this ad mistake celebrity with celerity, fanaticism with dynamism, adulation with admiration.

There were only two times over the last two decades when the Filipinos united and rose to heroic heights. Both had nothing to do with a personality, a celebrity, an object of fanatical adulation. Both had to do with a compelling need to end a tyranny and restore decency to this country. They were of course the two Edsas. The last one in fact was mounted against a thereto extremely popular figure, a president that had gotten the most votes in an election. The lesson is simple: People do not unite behind a celebrity, they unite behind a vision. People do not rally around a movie star, they rally around a dream.

I agree: The current administration sucks, and we need a leadership strong enough not to be waylaid by political obligations. But what, that can be given by someone surrounded by the same people Lino Brocka spent his life fighting?

Who are they?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

A NUMBER of lawyers whom I asked about new Comelec Commissioners Manuel Barcelona Jr. and Virgilio Garcillano didn't seem to know much about them. I suppose it's too much to ask that better-known legal personalities be appointed, inasmuch as few would probably want to join the Comelec at this time, given its enormous problems. But the complaint of Sen. Nene Pimentel about the alleged complicity of Garcillano in the "*dagdag-bawas*" case that made the senator lose an election gives the opposition a chance to further question the Comelec's credibility, at a time when it needs that virtue badly. In fact, I heard of two law deans who said they were no longer voting for President Macapagal-Arroyo on account of these two appointments, as well as that of Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Menita Chico-Nazario to the Supreme Court.

Some quarters did not receive Nazario's appointment with joy as they were displeased by the Sandignabayan's decision allowing former President Estrada to leave the country for medical reasons. That was perceived in some quarters as a political accommodation at GMA's behest in order to draw Erap's tacit support for her election bid.

* * *

The Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) has offered to lend its expertise and conduct a "job interview" to the presidential candidates to determine their fitness for the highest office. The PMAP, an umbrella organization of over 1,000 member companies, rightly argues that companies always conduct a thorough screening of all job applicants, so why not apply the same rigorous process to those applying for the toughest and most crucial job in the country? I would strongly endorse the PMAP's idea of subjecting the presidential candidates to this screening process. *Matira ang matibay.*

* * *

I read the full-page ad published by luminaries of the movie and entertainment industry pledging their "unconditional support" for their colleague Fernando Poe Jr. and extolling his virtues. "He is no liar," they said. "He is not capable of deception. He does not make promises he cannot keep." But one can't help noting that he did violate his vow of fidelity to his wife Susan Roces when he sired several children by other women, a number of them after their marriage.

* * *

An insider in the camp of K-4 vice presidential candidate Noli de Castro pointed out to me recently that he was indeed being egged on to run for president, and had he chosen to do so, even FPJ wouldn't be able to catch up with him. But, said the insider, De Castro realized he was not yet ready for the big job, and thus his decision to become President Macapagal's running mate. "Kabayan" is said to be happy with his role as GMA's understudy and intends to use the next six years learning all he can about the presidency by closely observing GMA at work. In fact, said this insider, to highlight this "togetherness," the campaign posters will always depict GMA and De Castro together as a team.

* * *

Our colleague Rina Jimenez-David wrote about the hilarious political comedy titled "Electile Dysfunction," that spoofed the four presidential candidates as well as Eduardo Cojuangco. The spoof, depicting a plane crash wherein all the five people perished and were up for God's judgment, ran for a few weeks in Music Museum to SRO crowds. My husband and I watched it on the invitation of ace photo journalist Mandy Navasero and we enjoyed it enormously. The lines crafted by politically savvy young writers were crisp and sharp and the characterization was good. But while all the candidates were spoofed, the show was more unkind to Panfilo Lacson and FPJ. At the end, the audience was asked to vote on whom to send to hell and whom to send back to earth as president. Producer Pete Cura told me that of the 15 shows they ran, GMA was sent back to earth eight times, while Roco was sent seven times. Considering that it caters to the A and B crowd in Metro Manila, which is traditionally opposition, things must be looking good for GMA.

* * *

Unilever, which has been here for 75 years, wrote this column to assure readers who have protested its sponsorship of the kissing event "Lovapalooza," at midnight of Feb. 13 at the Manila Baywalk, that it took into consideration their concerns very early on. Chito Macapagal, GM for corporate development, explained that "Lovapalooza" is a "celebration of love and affection" which are "positive emotions." Apart from trying to beat the Guinness World Record for the most number of kissing couples, it is a big Valentine party with games, food booths and free concerts. Moreover, Unilever sent copies of flyers showing that the 10-second kissing event will be limited to 18-year-olds and above. Still, I agree with readers who say that in these times, it's better to focus on happenings with more solid social values and which help in character formation.

* * *

In these troubled times, it's a wonder that there's so much lovely—and free—music around us. Tessie Serrano, music professor of Miriam College, who used to tutor me and two of my children in piano years back, sent us notice that the Metro Manila Community Orchestra (MMCO) is holding free concerts this month at various venues. The MMCO, which was founded on the vision of world-class violinist Alfonso Bolipata and has the support of the Miriam College Center for Applied Music, has over 50 musicians whose ages range from 10 to 48 and includes students, retired professionals and government employees—truly a community orchestra of the people and for the people. Tomorrow it will play at the Quezon City Hall lobby and on Feb. 15 at the Marikina City Hall, both at 5 p.m. Catch it if you have time.

Agent Orange: Time-delayed violence

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

NEWS from Agence France Presse (AFP) datelined Hanoi that was prominently bannered in the INQUIRER a few days ago said: "Three Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange have begun legal action against manufacturers of the defoliant used by US forces during the Vietnam war, a move analysts say was inevitable given Washington's failure to atone for its use."

The photo that went with the story was that of a cheering Thai Thi Ha, 13, his arms raised, during a fund-raising meeting for Agent Orange victims. All over the boy's arms and face were black spots that made him look like he had been sprayed with mud.

But mud it was not. This child was among the many children born long after the Vietnam war (1961-1975) was over and who bear the scars of that shameful era. To these children have been passed on the effects of the toxin that their parents ingested. Who knows how far down the line of generations the poison would go to maim and scar the innocents?

Last Jan. 30, the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange filed a lawsuit on behalf of the victims at the US Federal Court in New York. Named were more than 20 American companies that produced Agent Orange, among them Dow Chemical Co. and Monsanto Co. (Yes, Monsanto, the manufacturer of genetically modified organisms.) These two giants have been on the dock before for other products that have been cause for worry for inhabitants of this planet.

For 10 years, from 1961 to 1971, the United States and their ally, the South Vietnamese military, sprayed millions of liters of toxic herbicides, among them, Agent Orange, over parts of Vietnam to destroy the foliage that covered their enemy, the communist forces. This defoliation not only affected the target areas and their population, but also those handling and spraying the defoliants.

The defoliant's deadly component was dioxin which increases the risk of cancers, immune deficiencies, reproductive and developmental aberrations, nerve diseases and other physical defects.

US veterans have raised their voices for so long, but little was known about their Vietnamese counterparts, the women and the noncombatants especially.

I have two books that tackle Agent Orange and its effects on families: "Agent Orange: Impact of Chemical Warfare on the Reproductive Rights of Women and Men in Vietnam" (2000) and "Common Grounds: Violence Against Women in War and Conflict Situations" (1998) published by the Asian Centre of Women Human Rights (Ascent) and the Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (CGFED). Both books were published in the Philippines.

"Agent Orange" features 30 case studies of dioxin-exposed families. It uses photos (shot by Jimmy Domingo) and, more importantly, a "reproductive family history line" for each family to illustrate at what point Agent Orange figured. The research, headed by Prof. Le Thi Nham Tuyet of CGFED, covered four areas in Vietnam.

The book quotes former US President Bill Clinton as saying in 1996: "For over two decades, Vietnam veterans made the case that exposure to Agent Orange was injuring and killing them long before they left the field of battle, even damaging their children." That was a pitch for the US Viet vets.

In "Common Grounds," lecturer and writer Reiko Watanuko writes about the reproductive health of Vietnamese women and how dioxin damaged their life-giving potential. She cites a government report that says 19 million gallons of chemical weapons containing 170 kilograms of dioxin were used in over 3.6 million hectares of forests and rural villages in Southern Vietnam. This makes Vietnam the world's largest dioxin-polluted area.

Dioxin is a typical endocrine-disrupting chemical. Watanuko describes it as "time-delayed violence."

Watanuko decries the fact that US government documents and even the new book "Our Stolen Future" does not mention Vietnamese women. "In the book," Watanuko says, "Vietnam should have been presented as the most significant area in which the silent accusations from the yet-to-be-born future generation are made." Only the American soldiers who fought in the war were referred to, she complains.

As late as 1993, Watanuko says, the National Academy of Sciences in the United States was still feigning ignorance of the damage to the reproductive health of women. The harm to women has been practically ignored by the International Dioxin Conference.

And yet this issue was first presented as early as 1970 at a conference in France. Prof. Ton That Tung of Hanoi University said then: "Vietnamese women are suffering from abnormal pregnancies and frequently giving birth to babies with congenital defects as a result of poisoning by dioxin contained in herbicides."

Defoliation operations ceased in 1971, but 10 years of dioxin bombardment left a legacy of diseased and deformed human beings.

The Vietnamese government has never formally asked for compensation on behalf of the Vietnamese, but it has stated that the United States has the humanitarian responsibility to help heal the wounds of war. Two years ago, Vietnam and the United States signed an agreement for more research on the impact of the defoliants.

The suit should hasten this research. But a lot has already been done by advocacy groups. Chuck Searcy, an American aid worker in Vietnam, told AFP that "despite the US government saying there is no scientific evidence proving the impact of Agent Orange to human health here, the evidence seems pretty overwhelming."

The war is long over, but Agent Orange and its "time-delayed violence" continues to wreak havoc.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Rules define the game

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

POLITICS, like nature, abhors a vacuum. And so where there is an empty space—an unfilled position—a politician will always show up and try to occupy it, by being elected to the position. Politicians prefer, of course, to prevent power vacuums from existing by ensuring that all available spaces are filled by them. The problem (for them) is that positions can only be filled in collaboration with the electorate—unless, of course, politicians find a way to eliminate the participation of the electorate altogether. Then you get something like martial law, a time when an overwhelming number of our politicians were at their happiest and fattest.

My recent columns have been devoted to showing how the politicians devised a plan to restrict certain tendencies among their fellow politicians and the electorate, tendencies that were bothersome because they tended to make politics too fast and free, and thus, unpredictable. Just to reiterate, the tendencies were and are, first, the herd mentality among local representatives (the House of Representatives) which results in stampedes that upset national leaders. This was the case in our prewar National Assembly, and has been the case in the post-Edsa House of Representatives; it is also easier for more radical elements to infiltrate the House, which is another reason the Senate was brought back, to keep a lid on things (national leaders do not like radicalism, because it leads to stampedes either away from radicalism, or toward it).

The second tendency is a strange duality in the way politicians and voters behave. There is a tendency toward big, unwieldy super parties, and at the same time, toward small groups spinning off in all directions: the common problem, being in the end, party discipline. Party discipline, like a plant, can only thrive if the proper conditions exist. Thus, rules were designed to promote, first of all, a two-party system, and then a system that, at least on a national level, fosters the command and control of the party leadership and organization. The result? Bloc voting, which gave national party organizations a fighting chance against the preference of local leaders to build ad hoc coalitions because it assured local leaders a bigger say and greater clout.

Finally, to limit the tendency of local leaders to want to rule the roost, a strong presidency was provided for in the 1935 Constitution, anchored on the ability of the president to directly appoint mayors in chartered cities, which served as foil to local kingpins such as governors and congressmen. A charismatic and skilled president, such as Manuel Quezon or Ramon Magsaysay, with three such legs to stand on (access to a party operating under favorable electoral rules; a Senate to use as a foil against the House, and direct access to intervening in the make up of local politics) would be irresistible; even a non charismatic president, such as Elpidio Quirino, with basic political sense, would be capable of building up a strong machine.

But by the time of Magsaysay's death, two of the legs of the tripod had been eliminated, reducing his successors to holding an office deprived of its basic foundations, which is one reason why Carlos Garcia and Diosdado Macapagal were frustrated and ineffective in office. Macapagal engaged in an orgy of promoting party-switching, for which he was attacked, but it was a matter of survival at a time when party allegiances had lost their reason for being with the abolition of bloc voting. This is also how Ferdinand Marcos ended up scrapping the system.

The rules also ensured that politicians, who gained renown and experience slowly, had a good chance of retaining their positions, particularly in the Senate, the reason being the lack of term limits. A great number of the senators of the 1950s and 1960s had been senators, off and on, since the 1920s and 1940s. They served as a brake on the evolving tendency of the public to want celebrity leaders. Show-biz celebrities emerged on a national level the moment bloc voting was eliminated, a sign of things to come; but the spaces available were few, and the odds too much in favor of long-time politicians who had also achieved recognition.

But in 1987, term limits were imposed; the 1987 Senate was firmly in the hands of politicians with years of experience. The Senate after that, in 1992, saw Ramon Revilla, Vicente Sotto III and Freddie Webb elected. In that year, the celebrity trend begun in 1958 reasserted itself after the honeymoon period with the traditional politicos ended. Plus term limits became applicable, resulting in politicos with all the advantages having to step down and seek other offices.

And yet advantages in exposure on a national level are the reason candidates with decades of experience (regardless of what you think that experience consists of) have a fairly easy time returning to the Senate when they can, while politicians with less experience, unless they are especially charismatic or gifted, tend to lose to celebrities, who have all the public relations advantages that can only be matched by politicians with decades of national, and not just local, experience and recognition under their belts.

There is only so much talent to go around, which is why we forget, in recalling a Senate with Rectos and Tañadas, that so many of their colleagues ended up forgettable or regrettable, or both. And why after Magsaysay, we find it hard to have presidents with both charisma and competence.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Fool

YOUNG BLOOD

Jeanette Caquilala

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

"WISE men say only fools rush in...." Thus goes the first line of an old song.

I am no fool. I have always considered myself to be an intelligent woman. At an early age, I stood out on account of my academic achievements. I reaped innumerable awards. I was a student leader. I got my degree from our country's premier university and earned two more diplomas from abroad. I may have made false judgments and decisions in the past, but no one would have known that I had at one point in my life exhibited signs of being a fool.

Not until recently, when I fell in love.

I strive to be the best at whatever I do. Through the years, I have gained skills and knowledge that would help me face life's challenges. I have mastered a lot of subjects, but I remain an amateur with regard to relationships.

I have met more than a handful of men of different ethnic backgrounds, of different tongues, of different occupations, of different personalities. In the beginning, some would pass Filipino standards, but as the relationship progressed, they would turn out to be as wild as I had never imagined them before. Thus, I have become cautious, for I hold dear the values that my parents and my faith have taught me.

I grew up in a closely-knit conservative family. I was reared in a Catholic school for girls and was constantly surrounded and dictated by female influences. Men, sex and relationship were taboo.

But I have gone on dates. And more often than not, I would silently eliminate the person I was seeing, thinking that he was not just good enough for me or my family.

I am not stone-hearted. I have given serious dating a try, but it just never worked out. After a few months, I would tell myself I was not ready yet for a serious relationship. I was too scared to give all of myself. I was scared of committing the same mistakes. I was scared of being hurt.

That was until I met this guy.

I like strong, dark and green or brown-eyed Mediterranean Adonises. So, physically he was not my type. He was your typical Aussie bloke: towering at 6'4", fair and blue-eyed.

But Eros had a mysterious way of snaring my heart. I initially fell in love with him because he understood and spoke a bit of my language. He had studied Filipino in the university and was interested in our culture. That certainly earned him loads of brownie points from me.

He had volunteered when Mt. Pinatubo erupted a decade ago and had been to my hometown. We were virtually neighbors back then. I was overwhelmed by all these details and they helped push my romantic buttons. I could not help but think he was the one I had been waiting for all those years.

I was a fool.

He wanted me to be his girlfriend after a few days. He drew out all the wonderful plans that any starry-eyed woman like me could not resist. Besides I have always been a believer in "*carpe diem*" and consider "My Best Friend's Wedding" as one of the greatest films ever made. I believe that when you feel something for someone, just go ahead, say it and seize the day.

Which was what I did. I took the risk of falling and committing myself to him even though I knew there would be some serious problems with having a relationship in a Western society.

We had our happy moments. We were always going out and doing something: dining out, watching movies, rugby games and dog races, hearing Mass, reading newspapers together, riding on a motor bike, sightseeing, window-shopping. We stayed in hotels just to be together.

I was a dutiful girlfriend. I never thought that I could be domesticated. But I learned to iron his clothes, although that's the one thing I was never good at.

I loved him so much that I wanted to introduce him to my family. An opportunity arose for him and my sister to be acquainted, probably as siblings-in-law and that made me very happy.

I was a fool.

He would leave me for days, weeks and even a month to go interstate or overseas on some business ventures. I had no choice and I did not try to stop him. It hurt especially when I was the last to know of his departure. But, I never even thought of asking him to choose between his work and me. I just hung on to him and waited for his return.

I was blindly devoted to him. He might not call or text or reply to my e-mails when he was away, but I understood and made up all kinds of excuses for him. I trusted him a lot.

I was a fool.

He offered me marriage and I accepted, even if it meant giving up some of my dreams and going against my parents' wish. We made plans. Then, he left before Christmas to go abroad, and I didn't know when he was coming back.

I was a fool.

I did not hear from him for about a week. I tried all possible ways of reaching him without success. I was left wondering.

Then one afternoon he called to tell me he had decided to end our relationship. Just like that. It was a slap on my face, one that I did not see coming. I didn't have an inkling that it was coming.

I was in love. I rushed in. I was a fool.

But what the heck, tomorrow is another day. And I'll probably rush in again.

Jeanette Caquilala, 24, works as a receptionist and reservations consultant for a company in Sydney, Australia.

THEY SAID

Too little too late

"After I left him, the only time I saw him again was when he was 20, going on 21. I didn't even know my son. I sometimes feel guilty that I had petitioned for him and (shortly after) he died."

—Helen Thierren, on working abroad when his son, US Army Specialist Solomon Bangayan who was killed in Iraq, was just 2 years old

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Finance executive denies involvement in TCC scam

I WRITE in connection with the news article "Gov't exec tied to scam" by Clarissa S. Batino. (PDI, 02/02/04)

The news article is full of falsehood and malicious fabrications that Batino, as a veteran finance department beat reporter, should have known or could have easily verified had she interviewed me on the day we agreed upon.

Batino sent me a text message at around 3:40 p.m. last Feb. 1 because she wanted to discuss certain allegations against me by Felix Chingkoe. Batino then called me up using her cellular phone at around 4 p.m. that day. During our brief telephone conversation, I categorically and firmly denied all the statements she attributed to Chingkoe. Since it was already late Sunday afternoon, I told her I can show her at my office documents refuting Chingkoe's allegations. Batino agreed to be at my office the next day, Feb. 2, at 2:30 p.m.

I was therefore completely stunned to know that Batino proceeded in releasing her unverified and unfair news article despite our scheduled interview.

Batino knows or ought to know that the P2.5-billion tax credit scam involving the Chingkoe companies occurred in the period 1994 to 1998. I could not have been physically and legally involved in the scam since I joined the finance department only on April 1, 2002, a fact she noted in her article.

It is rather unfortunate that despite all indications that the alleged statements of Chingkoe are a complete lie, Batino still proceeded to cause [illegible] publication without giving [illegible] opportunity to give my side of the story.

It is my firm belief every news reporter has a responsibility to verify the truthfulness of his/her news articles. The principle of fair play would require a writer to exercise sound discretion in determining which statements are true and worthy of publication. The freedom of expression should be exercised carefully and should not violate any individual's rights.

I trust that your newspaper truly implements and practices Raul J. Palabrica's assertions in his "Readers' Advocate" column that "(t)here are no sacred cows among the 72 or so columnists of the INQUIRER."

—INOCENCIO P. FERRER JR.,
undersecretary,
Department of Finance,
Roxas Boulevard cor.
Pablo Ocampo Sr. Street,
Manila 1004

* * *

I REFER to the article "Gov't exec tied to scam" by Clarissa S. Batino (PDI, 02/02/04), which reported that "In May last year, Finance Undersecretary Inocencio Ferrer was accused of extorting money from Faustino (Chingkoe) in the presence of then Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, according to Felix (Chingkoe)."

I just want you to know that no such accusation happened in my presence. It would also have been useful if this was confirmed with me before it was printed.

—JOSE ISIDRO CAMACHO,
former finance secretary,
Makati City

UNDERSECRETARY Inocencio P. Ferrer Jr.'s explanation was not included in the story due to space limitations. His complete report on the tax credit scam was published on Feb. 9. We regret the oversight.—The Editors

Knee surgery costs $60,000 at Stanford

I READ the INQUIRER article concerning former President Joseph Estrada's pending knee surgery at Stanford which I faxed immediately to our friends at their International Medical Services with the suggestion that they clarify the facts. On Jan. 29, I received a fax transmission from Jennifer Sims, administrative director of Stanford's International Marketing Services. The following is the gist of Sims' message.

"Stanford Hospital and Clinics provides patients with information regarding fees but was never involved with the estimate given to former President Joseph Estrada. Hospital fees vary according to the individual patient's needs. The average charge for total knee replacement surgery at Stanford runs approximately to $60,000. If there are circumstances in which special amenities are required by the patient, such as security, additional rooms, etc., these would be added to the cost. In providing this service and all services, Stanford strives to give each patient the best quality care and service possible."

—DONALD MARSHALL
MCPO Box 2983,
Makati City

Seminars for new government executives

THE STREAM of newspaper reports on graft and corruption in government, on enrichment and luxurious living by public officials continues. Despite the bad publicity, an appointment to a government executive position remains an inviting proposition that attracts even those in the private sector and the uninitiated.

But neophyte public servants who enter government service are mostly unaware of existing government accounting and auditing rules and procedures, as well as the accountabilities that go with their positions. Self-centeredness, superiority complex, a false sense of self-righteousness and infallibility, coupled with narcissistic complex, makes a greenhorn executive who is ignorant of the rules and accountabilities, vulnerable to graft and corrupt practices.

To shield them from such vulnerability, it is suggested that as an initial step the Office of the Ombudsman, Sandiganbayan, the Commission on Audit, the Career Executive Service Office, the Civil Service Commission and the Office of the President work together and initiate the conduct of a Pre-Executive Position Assumption Orientation Seminar for neophyte government officials and newly promoted career personnel as a requisite for their assumption to office.

The subject matters of the seminar should include Accountabilities, Government Accounting and Auditing Rules and Regulations, Code of Ethics of Government Employees and Officials, relevant provisions of the Philippine Constitution, the government budget processes, among others. So with appointees to government councils and governing bodies. The seminars should be designed to provide them additional learning according to their responsibilities.

With such seminars, new officials will be better armed to perform their functions and duties. The weak hearted appointees and the unqualified may eventually realize the challenges and pressures which come with their respective positions and may just opt to back out.

This proposal should be a welcome change in government, contribute to better governance and improve public service.

—EMMANUEL L. PENSON,
19 Mt. Sajama St., Filinvest I,
Batasan Hills 1126, Quezon City

No to EO 268

WE oppose President Macapagal-Arroyo's Executive Order 268, lowering the country's tariff rates on many agriculture and fishery products to zero percent under the Common Effective Preferential Tariff Scheme of the Asean Free Trade Area (CEPT-Afta).

EO 268 allows the free entry of imported fish and removes all tariff protection on our domestic fishery products, especially tuna, crustaceans and mollusks. It is ironic that this executive order was issued while China and Thailand continue to maintain 40 and 30 percent tariff rates, respectively, on their importations of fishery products from other countries.

EO 268 violates Section 61 of the 1998 Fisheries Code which strictly prohibits the importation of fishery products except when such is demanded by the call of food security and only upon the issuance of an import permit by the agriculture secretary.

Free trade threatens the domestic fisheries industry. Unrestricted fish importation will lead to economic losses for the domestic fisheries sector which lacks government support and cannot compete with the heavily subsidized and, therefore, cheaper fishery products from China and Thailand. The Philippine government, in contrast, subsidizes only the aquaculture sector but not the small fisherfolk.

On the other hand, unrestricted fisheries exports will lead to over-exploitation of fishery resources. This is so because an open-access situation is still prevalent in the country's fishing grounds. In an open-access situation where fishery regulations are absent or not implemented, free trade tends to maximize production at the expense of the long-term sustainability of fishery resources that local communities depend on for their food.

President Macapagal's reckless rush toward free trade is anti-poor and anti-environment. It is inconsistent with the Cancun position of the Group of 21 countries (that included the Philippines) opposing greater market access at the expense of the livelihood and economic interests of millions of marginalized producers and their communities in the developing world.

—JAIME ESCOBER JR.,
information officer,
Tambuyog Development Center,
91 V. Luna Rd. Ext.,
Sikatuna Village, Quezon City

Election laws should be enforced

SECTION 264 of the Omnibus Election Code provides that any person who commits any election offense, including premature campaigning and illegal exhibit of posters and streamers, shall be punished with imprisonment of not less than one year but not more than six years and shall not qualify for probation. In addition, the guilty party shall be sentenced to suffer disqualification to hold public office and deprivation of the right of suffrage.

In the guise of Christmas greetings, many politicians running for public office in the coming elections have flagrantly violated the law with huge banners and billboards conspicuously displayed all over Metro Manila. The Commission on Elections should enforce the law strictly and not give in to the lame excuse that this is done in the spirit of Christmas.

One other thing: in every election, posters, pennants and other election materials of individual candidates and party lineups are pasted on walls fences, street posts, street signs, bridges, traffic signs and every conceivable surface open to the public. Again, this practice is a flagrant violation of the Omnibus Election Code. The law provides that a common display area in the community should be designated for these campaign materials. Why can't the government, particularly the Comelec, enforce the law and punish the violators? The campaign materials contain the names of the erring candidates and the latter cannot claim that these materials were posted without their knowledge.

If the Comelec needs the assistance of other government agencies, it should deputize these agencies to go after the violators of the election law. Even NGOs can be deputized to enforce the law and help prosecute the violators. If the Comelec fails to enforce the law on the illegal display of campaign materials, I suggest that civic organizations file a class suit against this inutile government commission. It's about time.

—APOLONIO G. RAMOS,
42 Mindanao St.,
Marikina, Metro Manila

Two views on open skies

A FULL-PAGE advertisement, headlined "In Support of Bertie Lim," appeared in your paper on Jan. 28, signed by prominent community leaders from Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Gov. Erico Aumentado of Bohol and Mayor Tomas Osmeña were among the signatories. On the other hand, the two full-page ads attacking Lim and Prof. Victor Limlingan were unsigned, and were instigated by shadowy organizations such as Aviation Empowerment and Solidarity (AVES) and Mamamayang Kabalikat ng Bansa (Makabansa). Who are behind these organizations and where did their funding come from, enough to take out two full-page ads in this paper which cost them P325,000? Already, the Confederation of Filipino Workers, one of the organizations listed in the ad, wrote a letter to your editor publicly stating that it never lent its name to this vilification campaign against Lim and Limlingan. (PDI, 1/21/04)

For the record, Limlingan is a professor of good standing of the Asian Institute of Management and a respected member of the academic and consulting community. When he was a member of the Civil Aeronautics Board under President Fidel V. Ramos, he implemented faithfully the letter and intent of Executive Order 219, liberalizing civil aviation policy. For doing his job, Philippine Airlines filed two cases against him—one, an administrative case in the Ombudsman and another, a graft case in the Sandiganbayan. The administrative case was dropped while the Sandiganbayan case has been languishing in the court for eight years. Limlingan was never convicted of any crime and it is utterly false to state that he is barred from holding any public office for life.

I challenge the people behind the libelous ads to come out and debate issues on civil aviation policy, instead of destroying the reputations of innocent individuals.

—NARZALINA Z. LIM,
chair, Freedom to Fly Coalition,
8 St. Peter St., Cubao, Quezon City

* * *

THE STATEMENT of Save our Skies (SOS), in its advertisement in the Feb. 4 issue of the INQUIRER, that Alberto Lim got the signatures of the Palawan Tourism Council (PTC) members and used them as an excuse to open up rights to and from South Korea despite the absence of demand on the route is incorrect and a misrepresentation of facts.

To put things straight, the "signatures" being referred to are signatures affixed to a letter, dated June 19, 2003, for Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza. At that time, there were reports that the Department of Transportation and Communications and the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) decided to postpone air talks with Korea to December 2003. A number of PTC members, myself included, agreed to write a letter urging the DOTC and CAB to resume the talks at the soonest possible time as the talks concerned one of the top source markets of Palawan. I can attest that no member was forced to sign the letter, and those who signed did so on their own free will.

SOS' statement that we "may not be aware of the destructive and ruinous effect of Lim's move because we are not from the aviation industry" is presumptuous. Is knowledge and understanding of the airline industry the sole purview of the aviation industry? A lot of us deal with and are in fact dependent on the airlines. It is also so unfair to imply that PTC members—owners and officers of hotels, resorts, tour and transport companies, restaurants, and officials of government agencies/units—would sign a letter without understanding the issues concerned and agreeing to what is being set forth.

—CRISTINA V. MATTA,
secretary, Palawan Tourism
Council, c/o Divelink/Coral Bay
Resort, Unit 15C Atherton Place,
Tomas Morato, Quezon City

Americanizing Pinoy names

HIGH BLOOD

Naty Lapuz-Templo

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —Ed.

WERE I to be born and christened in this era, my mother would probably have named me "Nativity," instead of Natividad. Why not? There's a "Felicity" character on a Western TV show—isn't Felicidad the local equivalent? Most of my contemporaries used to sport Spanish monikers until they decided to keep up with the American-dominated times and renamed themselves Rose (from Rosalia), Frank (from Francisco), Cecile (from Cecilia), Arthur (from Arturo), Mary (from Maria), etc. Nicknames similarly evolved from Viring to Virgie, from Paeng to Raffy, from Esting to Steve, from Pinang to Jo, to cite a few.

Incidentally, I recently got an e-mail from a friend in California, listing some Filipino names that had to be changed when the persons concerned became naturalized US citizens. Someday you might meet any of the following: Gregorio Talahib (George Bush), Remigio Batungbakal (Remington Steele), Juanito Lakarin (Johnny Walker), Leon Mangubat (Tiger Woods), Ligaya Añonuevo (Happy New Year), Kasimiro Bukaykay (Cashmere Bouquet).

Maybe we should start thinking up American names to assume if and when we decide to migrate to the land of promise. I read somewhere that one out of every five Filipinos is now desirous of leaving our messy country (which is still getting messier every day, tsk, tsk) and starting anew elsewhere, preferably the United States. Surely we would want our prospective countrymen to be able to say our names right at first sight and not fumble with tongue-twisters such as, for instance, Torquata Emerenciana Biglangsibul; it might prejudice our application for naturalization if our would-be compatriots have to struggle pronouncing them, see?

On second thought, why abandon our original names just because we have adopted, or are contemplating to get adopted, by another country? Look at California Gov. Arnold Schwarzennegger. He felt comfortable and had pride in his Austrian last name, so he did not care whether his movie fans and the California electorate could even say or spell it. He must be the kind of person whom the German writer Johann Goethe had in mind when he (Goethe) said, "A man's name is not like a cloak that merely hangs around him, that may be loosened or tightened at will. It's a perfectly fitting garment. It grows over him like his very skin. One cannot scrape or scratch at it without injuring the man himself."

Me? I will insist on using my calendar-based first name in formal papers and my nickname in less formal ones. Thus, have I been identified these 60 plus years and I am not about to make any changes for any reason whatsoever. Not even to please the US Immigration, *peks man*.

There was a time in the past when I considered assuming a western sounding name. This was when I corresponded with teenagers abroad. (Back then, writing to pen pals was a popular activity among high school kids; teachers even abetted the practice as a next-to-ideal means of cultural exchange.) My foreign friends found my name strange and often misspelled it. One girl kept on starting her letter with "Dear Nasty," and although I corrected her a few times, she could not get it right. Finally, I decided to drop her from my mail list. I did not want to maintain a friendship with someone who made me feel disgusting, annoying, or offensive!

Going back to calendar names, our parents then strictly followed the Catholic calendar when they picked their babies' names. You were born on the feast day of St. Peter (San Pedro) and they had you baptized as Pedro, on St. Mary's birthday and you were named Maria. It so happens that there are numerous St. Peters and St. Marys, which explains why there are also so many Pedros and Marias among the elderly folks today.

In my hometown, Arayat, Pampanga, I remember at least four adult Marias in our immediate neighborhood. To distinguish one from the other, they became known by certain nicknames. One was referred to as "Mariang Poli," because she was married to a man named Poli. Another was "Mariang Dapug" (*dapug* is the Kapampangan term for a burning heap of dried leaves or grass or any such combustibles; maybe this Maria often burned dried leaves in her backyard). There was "Mariang Pakbung" (I think the root word is *papakbung*, meaning "to shoot a gun or firecracker," but I have no idea how her nickname came about, unless she was fond of firecrackers; no, I don't think she liked guns). "Mariang Duling" was my distant aunt on my father's side—she was exceedingly and pitifully squint-eyed, so much so that I tended to avoid looking directly into her eyes. Out of courtesy, of course, nobody called her that to her face.

I understand that pastors will not baptize children unless they carry the names of saints. But there are some parents who want to have their way. My favorite homilist tells of a mother who chose "Toyota" to be the name of her baby. When the priest rejected it, she reportedly protested, "But my neighbor had her child christened 'Mercedes.'"

Some people, in their desire to perpetuate the memory of their ancestors, string up the latter's names and impose these on hapless kids. Thus, one little child may be burdened with such a kilometric name as "Maria Lourdes Carmela Potenciana Dominga Isabel" just like European royalty. Can you imagine how long it will take a first grader to write that down on her school paper?

These days you may come across a Venderleaf, a Truman, a Wainwright, or a Washington, which names must have been influenced by admired historical figures. Given the propensity of parents to be attracted to new things, it may not be long from now that some kids will go by such names as Macintosh, Microsoft, Hewlett, etc. My advice is for them to precede any of these with "Maria" so that they will not get into trouble with the kids' baptizers.

Naty Lapuz-Templo used to work with a government agency. She retired in 1998.

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Bishop tells bets: Campaign on issues

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra has called on candidates to keep the campaign at a high level by sticking to platform issues and not delving on personalities.

He also called on the candidates not to encourage the voters to depend on dole-outs as well as not to buy votes and resort to threats.

The bishop issued the appeal on Tuesday during the start of the campaign period for national candidates.

Navarra said he hopes the candidates would be guided by Christian principles and the electorate be enlightened in selecting their candidates based on their platforms of government and the kind of leadership they could offer to the country.

He said the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting has been asked to continue with its voters' education campaign to ensure "Clean, Honest, Accurate, Meaningful and Peaceful Elections."

Candidates and their supporters have started to woo voters in this city.

Supporters of presidential candidate Panfilo Lacson held a caravan in Bacolod City on Tuesday morning. In the afternoon, senatorial candidate Perfecto Yasay held a caravan around the city's main streets.

Posters of Lacson and fellow presidential candidates Raul Roco and Fernando Poe Jr. have also started proliferating in downtown Bacolod City.

Provincial elections officer Marsha Cordero gave supporters of these candidates 24 hours to remove these campaign posters and place these in the designated areas.

"If they commit the offense again, we will file the necessary charges before the (Commission on Elections) law department," she said.

The Comelec has 25 designated areas in Bacolod where candidates can post their campaign materials. These include the Bacolod public plaza, central market on Burgos-Libertad Streets and the Bacolod Memorial Park on Alejis Street.

Cordero said supporters of Poe, Lacson and senatorial candidate Richard Gordon have violated the law by posting campaign materials outside designated areas.

Some business establishments also complained that posters were being pasted on their buildings, which is in violation of the law, she added.

"Candidates running for national posts should ensure that their supporters respect the law," Cordero said.

The black and white posters of Poe and running mate Loren Legarda bore the message "Together, helping each other to build a new day. In the FPJ and Loren tandem the nation is the star."

The poster of Roco and running mate Herminio Aquino harped on free education: "Free education! Hope of a new Philippines."

The Lacson posters, on the other hand, bore his picture with his name in bold yellow letters.

ROUNDUP

Police award

LUCENA CITY—The Quezon Provincial Police Office (QPPO) has been awarded the best police provincial office nationwide. Senior Supt. Leo Kison, Quezon police chief, received the award from President Macapagal-Arroyo and PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane during the recent celebration of the 13th anniversary of the Philippine National Police held in Camp Crame. The QPPO beat other provincial police offices with its accomplishments in the government's battle against illegal drugs and street crimes. Kison, who started his tour of duty as provincial director only last Dec. 12, has pledged to strive harder in maintaining peace and order in the province. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Most wanted falls

LUCENA CITY—A team of law enforcers from different military units in Quezon arrested Parañaque City's most wanted criminal in Barangay Niin, San Antonio town on Tuesday. Senior Supt. Leo Kison, Quezon police chief, identified the suspect as Dominador P. Gonzales, a former member of the Pasay City police office. When tipped off by civilians on the presence of the suspect in the area, elements of the 415th Provincial Police Mobile Group and San Antonio police force and soldiers from the military's Southern Luzon Command immediately set up a checkpoint. Gonzales, who did not resist arrest, was caught while driving a private jeep with license plate no. TEB 450. He yielded a .38-cal. revolver and several rounds of ammunition. The suspect has a string of warrants of arrest for murder, robbery and car theft. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Bet slain

MAGSINGAL, Ilocos Sur—A candidate for councilor here was shot and killed by a policeman outside the town's police station on Wednesday morning. Police said Danilo Tagayuna, 40, was gunned down by PO3 Bernardo Tubon after Tagayuna took the policeman hostage at about 2:30 a.m. Reports said Tubon went to a videoke bar in Barangay Panay Norte to look for his son. When the policeman arrived at the bar, Tagayuna, who was reportedly drunk at that time, and five men approached him. The group, reports said, took Tubon's .45 cal. pistol and at gunpoint forced him to board Tagayuna's jeep. Tubon said Tagayuna, a former barangay captain of Bungro here, demanded firearms. The policeman said they proceeded to the Magsingal police station to get his Armalite rifle. Tubon was able to take his rifle from the station and when he and Tagayuna were leaving, he found a chance to shoot Tagayuna. ***Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Go FEDER
GLORIA!
Go GLORIA
Lihok Pideral Mind
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RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

FEDERALISM
Members of the group Lihok Federal Mindanao make their sentiments known in support of a federal system of government. The group has decided to support the Macapagal administration following Ms Macapagal's open support for constitutional amendments.

Comelec nullifies proclamation of town officials

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Commission on Elections (Comelec) in Manila nullified the 2001 proclamation of all local officials in Glan town in Sarangani due to technicalities.

The decision came just as the campaign period for the national elections started and barely two months before the next elections.

Lawyer Michael Abbas, Comelec provincial officer, told the INQUIRER that the Comelec's First Division promulgated the order last January 31. His office received a copy of the order last February 6.

But Abbas said the order was not self-executory, meaning Glan town Mayor Enrique Yap Jr., the vice mayor and all the seven municipal councilors are not yet unseated and may continue holding office.

"We are still waiting for the confirmation (of the nullification order) from the Comelec Manila," he said.

The local Comelec official revealed that he was instructed to head and reconstitute the board of canvassers but is still waiting for the official confirmation of their appointments from the head office of the Comelec in Manila.

Abbas could not give the exact date when the re-canvassing of all election returns would start.

He clarified that what they were going to do was just to check the election returns, not to recount the ballots.

The Comelec's First Division annulled the proclamation of all winning candidates in Glan during the 2001 local elections as Jose Villanueva, then chair of the board of canvassers that proclaimed the winning candidates, was later found out to be ineligible as head of the canvassing body.

Villanueva, then just a substitute, is not a lawyer.

Election law requires that, in cases of substitution, the chair of the board of canvassers must be a lawyer.

In an interview with reporters, Yap refused to issue any statement, saying he would leave everything to his lawyer.

Yap won over his rival Flora Benzonan, now a candidate for board member in Sarangani, by more than 10,000 votes.

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Bishop tells bets: Campaign on issues

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra has called on candidates to keep the campaign at a high level by sticking to platform issues and not delving on personalities.

He also called on the candidates not to encourage the voters to depend on dole-outs as well as not to buy votes and resort to threats.

The bishop issued the appeal on Tuesday during the start of the campaign period for national candidates.

Navarra said he hopes the candidates would be guided by Christian principles and the electorate be enlightened in selecting their candidates based on their platforms of government and the kind of leadership they could offer to the country.

He said the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting has been asked to continue with its voters' education campaign to ensure "Clean, Honest, Accurate, Meaningful and Peaceful Elections."

Candidates and their supporters have started to woo voters in this city.

Supporters of presidential candidate Panfilo Lacson held a caravan in Bacolod City on Tuesday morning. In the afternoon, senatorial candidate Perfecto Yasay held a caravan around the city's main streets.

Posters of Lacson and fellow presidential candidates Raul Roco and Fernando Poe Jr. have also started proliferating in downtown Bacolod City.

Provincial elections officer Marsha Cordero gave supporters of these candidates 24 hours to remove these campaign posters and place these in the designated areas.

"If they commit the offense again, we will file the necessary charges before the (Commission on Elections) law department," she said.

The Comelec has 25 designated areas in Bacolod where candidates can post their campaign materials. These include the Bacolod public plaza, central market on Burgos-Libertad Streets and the Bacolod Memorial Park on Alejis Street.

Cordero said supporters of Poe, Lacson and senatorial candidate Richard Gordon have violated the law by posting campaign materials outside designated areas.

Some business establishments also complained that posters were being pasted on their buildings, which is in violation of the law, she added.

"Candidates running for national posts should ensure that their supporters respect the law," Cordero said.

The black and white posters of Poe and running mate Loren Legarda bore the message "Together, helping each other to build a new day. In the FPJ and Loren tandem the nation is the star."

The poster of Roco and running mate Herminio Aquino harped on free education: "Free education! Hope of a new Philippines."

The Lacson posters, on the other hand, bore his picture with his name in bold yellow letters.

ROUNDUP

Police award

LUCENA CITY—The Quezon Provincial Police Office (QPPO) has been awarded the best police provincial office nationwide. Senior Supt. Leo Kison, Quezon police chief, received the award from President Macapagal-Arroyo and PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane during the recent celebration of the 13th anniversary of the Philippine National Police held in Camp Crame. The QPPO beat other provincial police offices with its accomplishments in the government's battle against illegal drugs and street crimes. Kison, who started his tour of duty as provincial director only last Dec. 12, has pledged to strive harder in maintaining peace and order in the province. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Most wanted falls

LUCENA CITY—A team of law enforcers from different military units in Quezon arrested Parañaque City's most wanted criminal in Barangay Niin, San Antonio town on Tuesday. Senior Supt. Leo Kison, Quezon police chief, identified the suspect as Dominador P. Gonzales, a former member of the Pasay City police office. When tipped off by civilians on the presence of the suspect in the area, elements of the 415th Provincial Police Mobile Group and San Antonio police force and soldiers from the military's Southern Luzon Command immediately set up a checkpoint. Gonzales, who did not resist arrest, was caught while driving a private jeep with license plate no. TEB 450. He yielded a .38-cal. revolver and several rounds of ammunition. The suspect has a string of warrants of arrest for murder, robbery and car theft. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Bet slain

MAGSINGAL, Ilocos Sur—A candidate for councilor here was shot and killed by a policeman outside the town's police station on Wednesday morning. Police said Danilo Tagayuna, 40, was gunned down by PO3 Bernardo Tubon after Tagayuna took the policeman hostage at about 2:30 a.m. Reports said Tubon went to a videoke bar in Barangay Panay Norte to look for his son. When the policeman arrived at the bar, Tagayuna, who was reportedly drunk at that time, and five men approached him. The group, reports said, took Tubon's .45 cal. pistol and at gunpoint forced him to board Tagayuna's jeep. Tubon said Tagayuna, a former barangay captain of Bungro here, demanded firearms. The policeman said they proceeded to the Magsingal police station to get his Armalite rifle. Tubon was able to take his rifle from the station and when he and Tagayuna were leaving, he found a chance to shoot Tagayuna. ***Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

GO FEDER
GO GLORIA!
Lihok Pideral Minda
-CMI
STA si G
IAK

RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

FEDERALISM
Members of the group Lihok Federal Mindanao make their sentiments known in support of a federal system of government. The group has decided to support the Macapagal administration following Ms Macapagal's open support for constitutional amendments.

Comelec nullifies proclamation of town officials

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Commission on Elections (Comelec) in Manila nullified the 2001 proclamation of all local officials in Glan town in Sarangani due to technicalities.

The decision came just as the campaign period for the national elections started and barely two months before the next elections.

Lawyer Michael Abbas, Comelec provincial officer, told the INQUIRER that the Comelec's First Division promulgated the order last January 31. His office received a copy of the order last February 6.

But Abbas said the order was not self-executory, meaning Glan town Mayor Enrique Yap Jr., the vice mayor and all the seven municipal councilors are not yet unseated and may continue holding office.

"We are still waiting for the confirmation (of the nullification order) from the Comelec Manila," he said.

The local Comelec official revealed that he was instructed to head and reconstitute the board of canvassers but is still waiting for the official confirmation of their appointments from the head office of the Comelec in Manila.

Abbas could not give the exact date when the re-canvassing of all election returns would start.

He clarified that what they were going to do was just to check the election returns, not to recount the ballots.

The Comelec's First Division annulled the proclamation of all winning candidates in Glan during the 2001 local elections as Jose Villanueva, then chair of the board of canvassers that proclaimed the winning candidates, was later found out to be ineligible as head of the canvassing body.

Villanueva, then just a substitute, is not a lawyer.

Election law requires that, in cases of substitution, the chair of the board of canvassers must be a lawyer.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Frustrated nun finds fulfillment in mission work

By Madonna T. Virola
Calapan City

TO THE poor people in the wilderness and marshland of Villa San Antonio in Barangay Navotas, Calapan City, she is simply Sister Tess or Ate Tess. They know that she has committed herself to perform a lay missionary's work without any compensation or expectations but God's reward.

From the city proper, one takes a tricycle and then a small boat, walks on wooden and improvised bamboo bridges and rides on a *trisikad* (tricycle) pushed by young people to reach Villa San Antonio, a refreshing place named after its owner.

When this writer visited the place, the old women, although toothless, were all smiles. They seemed happy and strong with Ate Tess around. "When you respect people under any circumstance, they respect you back," Ate Tess said.

"You [should have] entered the convent where life is secure and where you could become a superior," she would be told.

Teresita Cabasan, 66, had wanted to become a nun since she was in college. She began her charity work at home and pursued it elsewhere until she realized that was already too old to enter the convent.

Cabasan took an Associate in Arts course at the St. Scholastica's College in Manila, where she was a scholar. She landed on the Top 10 in the entrance examinations.

She thought that she didn't fit there because the students came from elite families. She said she was an *asindera* or having only *pandesal* for snacks. One of the nuns, Leova, would give her other snacks as she was also being considered to join the congregation.

On her second year, Cabasan transferred to the Lyceum of Manila, which allowed her to work while studying. She once worked as a checker with the Commission on Elections.

At some point, she had wanted to be a lawyer.

Boyfriend

She had a boyfriend, three years older than her, who was completing his medical studies. The guy knew about her desire to become a nun but assured her that her "joy is his joy."

Cabasan was hands-up in describing the kindness of her boyfriend, who came from a rich family. He had told her that it would be an extra blessing for her to have someone outside the convent who would be praying for her.

But after she filled out the nunnery application form, he tore it—to her big surprise. They split until the guy became sick as he took the situation very seriously.

"Tell no one," the guy told her, "that I became sick because I could not afford to lose you." Eventually, he died.

Guilt and remorse haunted Cabasan for 15 years, but her calling to missionary life was clear. Even in group sharings, she would keep this secret to herself.

More misfortunes

When she was all set to enter the convent, her mother's health worsened. Cabasan immediately went home and a month later, her mother died. Her mother's blood pressure had shot up following her frequent fights with her father, who objected to their daughter's entering the convent.

The fifth of eight children—four girls and four boys—she was entrusted with administering the household and other property. She had to stay home even longer when her father was paralyzed. He died 10 years after.

Lay mission

At 40 then, Cabasan was too old to fulfill her desire to become a nun. But a missionary program gave her hope. "Not all flowers are for the convent. You can still serve by entering the missionary program of the Maryknoll Fathers—the Philippine Lay Missionary," she read in a paper.

She was surprised to have passed the physical examinations for missionary applicants despite her heart's weak left ventricle. When told by a program official that hers was a "last call," she didn't waste any time and applied, but not until her role at home was completed.

She was supposed to work as a peer counselor among domestic workers in Hong Kong, but the priest there could not agree with their terms for an additional flat and for focusing only on Filipino workers. Instead, she worked among people squatting on a university campus.

SISTER Tess or Ate Tess talks with one of the elderly residents of a remote village in Calapan City, where she is involved in community organizing.
MADONNA T. VIROLA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Organizing

Cabasan was offered a teaching post in Lyceum but did not accept it. Instead, she worked as a community organizer of the Paraclete Foundation in Cavite, where she handled projects on water management and livelihood with the Dutch Millhill Missionaries.

She couldn't forget her 50th birthday when the community made a big rice cake for her with candles on it. Young people, who were the children of parents she was organizing, serenaded her.

Cabasan then worked as a researcher and community organizer in Sampaloc, Manila, with Sr. Victricia Pascasio, after which she was invited by the Bishop of Mindoro to do missionary work on the island.

In Barangay Managpi, where there was no priest, she organized 12 communities.

After six years of service in the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan, she joined fellow missionary Yolly Piñon in putting up the Society of Active Laity of the Trinity (SALT). She found a support group in SALT. Members meet once a month for a sharing of mission wherever they were.

Life with poor

Serving the poor is serving oneself most, Cabasan said. "When I transformed, change in others followed for they could catch easily what I showed."

She learned to live on her own, surviving on what was available. She slept with the people, ate what they had.

In Maidlang, she organized the Samahang Magbubukid Cooperative in Bagong Pook in Barangay Gutad, the Samahan ng Matatanda sa Villa at Maidlang, and the Samahan ng Taga-Maidlang sa Kanluran.

The cooperative was a success story. From a P5 share per member (in 1996, there were only 10 members), the group's capital grew to P119,000, with a store, training center, storage of palay, seeds and fertilizer, among other assets.

Three years ago, when the cooperative celebrated its fifth year, Cabasan was gifted with a "Founder" t-shirt.

Perseverance

Cabasan would stumble and get sick while doing missionary work, but people in the communities would take turns in taking care of her. "I may not have a family of my own, but the people take care of me."

Meeting Cabasan and learning of her choice makes one reflect on the essentials of life—living simply, loving the poor, serving tirelessly, and being one with nature. Asked how she sees herself a few years from now, she said: "God will surely provide."

3,500 Los Baños families to own land after 50 years

By Marlon Ramos
Los Baños, Laguna

AFTER 40 years, Angelita Calibo and her neighbors' dream of legally owning their houses and lots in Purok 2, Barangay Lalakay in Los Baños, Laguna may finally be realized.

On Tuesday, when President Macapagal-Arroyo came to town to kick off her election campaign for a full term, she declared that portions of the 240-hectare military reservation covering three barangays be assigned as a settlement area and site for socialized housing for low-income families.

"We are very happy. After so many years, we now have a chance to legally own the lot we've occupied since our childhood. We thank the President and our local officials in making our dream come true," Calibo said. "We're not squatters anymore."

She said she and other villagers had toiled so much to develop a large section of the reservation but they did not have documents to show that they really owned the land.

Mayor Caesar Perez said the President's declaration was "a fitting gift for my townmates who have invested time and money clearing the once forested area."

Perez said some 3,500 families who had occupied the area for over 50 years would be benefited. The proclamation, he said, would also help other homeless residents in the upland and coastal areas.

"This is probably the biggest gift that our town received from any President. This will surely benefit even the coming generations. Now, there will be no squatters inside the military reservation," Perez said.

Some 1,500 residents gathered at the National Arts Center theater and waited for two hours for Ms Macapagal to formally announce her proclamation as one of the thrusts of her administration. Every Filipino, she said, aspires to own even a piece of property.

LAGUNA residents warmly welcome President Macapagal during the launching of her election campaign in the province.
PNS/PHILNEWS

"Today ... I invited some residents of Camp Eldridge for two reasons. First, for them to see some of their favorite stars. Second, to witness my proclamation giving them the chance to own the lots they occupy," the President said to the delight of the crowd.

"You are no longer squatters," she added. "You are now house owners."

Military reservation

Perez's executive assistant Leo Pantua said the project would cover around 100 hectares of land in Barangay Lalakay, Timugan and Bambang.

The area is part of the 242-hectare lot of Camp Eldridge, a military reservation declared by virtue of an executive order signed on Sept. 1, 1903 by then US President Theodore Roosevelt.

It was once occupied by the Armed Forces' Engineering Brigade. A military hospital was built on the property.

The place is also home to several government science and research centers, such as the Philippine Council for Marine and Aquatic Research and Development, the Bureau of Plant Industry, and the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development.

2 years

Municipal planning head Rafael Lapastora said the local council members were working out the guidelines for the smooth distribution of the land.

The council has already created the Local Inter Agency Committee (LIAC) which will oversee the implementation of the land transfer. The body is composed of representatives from various government agencies, including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Public Works and Highways, and the local government.

Perez was assigned to head the group.

Lapastora said the guidelines would outline the rules for application of the beneficiaries, the manner and mode of payment, the size of the lot, and the terms and conditions concerning the transfer of ownership.

He said they had waited for two years before they got the nod of the President. Perez spearheaded the meetings with several government agencies involved in the project.

"It was an exhausting project. But our mayor was determined to have the President sign the papers. After two years, I can honestly say that our efforts paid off," he said.

The proclamation was the second presidential order that gave land to low-income families of the town. In 2001, he said, Ms Macapagal signed their request for a 10-hectare lot in Barangay Putho-Tuntungin to be given to around 600 families.

Perez thanked the National Housing Authority, the Commission on Urban Poor, and other government agencies for processing their request, as well as the Department of National Defense, the real owners of the settlement area, for agreeing to their request.

Vote-buying

But while the residents of Los Baños welcomed the project, others saw it as part of a scheme by the administration to attract votes for its candidates.

Bani Cambronero, a staff member of the Bayan Muna party-list group, said the timing of the presidential proclamation was suspicious.

"The proclamation makes the beneficiary families politically indebted. The President may have wanted the families to pay her back on May 10. It could be an indirect vote-buying," Cambronero argued.

Perez quickly shrugged off the allegations, saying: "We started this project long before the President declared her candidacy. How can anyone say that this is vote-buying."

"The problem is that many Filipinos opt to make a fuss of our initiative to help small people. If we have not done this, then they will accuse us of sleeping on our job or neglecting the issues of the poor," he lamented.

Coincidence

The mayor said the timing of the official proclamation was just coincidental. "Please do not politicize the issue. We are here to help the residents own their land," he said.

Roy Iglesias, head of the municipal Urban Development and Housing, also denied the accusation. He said they have worked for the implementation of the project without asking for "influence" from any national political figures.

"We waited and patiently worked to get this proclamation. No politicians from the national government influenced us to do this. It was the initiative of Mayor Perez to help our townmates. There was definitely no prodding from any Malacañang official," Iglesias said.

He said the proclamation should have been made in December last year. "Unfortunately, we had problems with some of the papers required by the DENR and DND. We were able to clear the papers just last month," he said.

Iglesias also clarified that the proclamation does not cover a controversial 30-hectare lot being occupied by the Department of Science and Technology, PCCARD and other government research institutions.

The lot was being claimed by a certain Teresita Teope, he said.

METRO
E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

FOUR DIGIT
2 8 8 8
(In exact order)
SUERTRES
1 7 3

MEGALOTTO 6/45
5 6 14 16 21 44

IBOTO!
IBOTO!
GLORIA
President

DOWN go President Macapagal and her running mate Sen. Noli de Castro—their banners, rather—as members of an MMDA crew clear Edsa of illegally posted campaign materials. JOAN BONDOC

Poll bets in mad scramble for tight campaign space

By Luige del Puerto and Edson Tandoc Jr.

EXPECT candidates or their supporters to squabble over whatever space there is at the common poster areas of the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

The Comelec has no hard and fast rule regarding who posts what and how on these designated areas.

"It's a race for space," said Pasig City Comelec officer lawyer Romeo Alcazar.

According to the implementing rules of the Fair Election Act, each party may erect a 12-foot by 16-foot billboard in places where printed campaign materials could be posted.

What's legal, illegal?

Independent candidates, on the other hand, are allowed billboards of 4 x 6 feet.

It is illegal to post propaganda materials on walls or lamp posts. Banners, posters and streamers must be placed only on billboards.

Designated common poster areas are plazas, mini parks, basketball courts, public markets, barangay halls and vacant lots.

In case of contention, Alcazar advised candidates to write the Comelec.

"We will resolve the issue by tossing a coin or drawing lots. But it would be best if candidates would settle it among themselves," he said.

When pressed if this system would only cause more trouble, Alcazar said he was confident candidates were "rational people" who could "talk and settle the issues peacefully."

Anyway, designated poster areas are not the only places where candidates may advertise themselves, he said.

Private posting areas

Candidates may put-up posters in private places as long as there is consent from owners.

The 90-day campaign period for national bets officially kicked off on Monday. The local campaign period starts on Feb. 25.

In Navotas, the local government put up two 8 x 16 feet white billboards in 10 places where candidates and supporters could paste all the posters they want.

Posters outside these areas, except those pasted on walls and houses with the consent of the home owners, would be removed, local elections officer Armando Mallorca said.

But while other candidates fight over fixed poster space, President Macapagal-Arroyo's face and name would be carried around Metro Manila by "Tindahan ni Gloria" vans.

Yesterday, Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo was in Caloocan City, where he sent off six refrigerated "Gloria" vans.

The vans would sell pork meat from P115 to P125 per kilo to residents.

Pork currently sells for P135 per kilo in public markets. The bird flu scare has affected the sale of chicken and has forced consumers to turn to pork and beef.

A lot from Gloria

Meanwhile, the administration campaigned in northern Metro Manila by giving away lots to indigent families in Caloocan City.

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed the proclamation awarding to homeless families a 14-hectare lot of the Philippine National Railways back in 2001, but the first of the 309 lots were offered for sale to long-time residents only yesterday.

Each lot could be bought by residents for P3,000 to P5,000 payable in 10 years.

BF takes hands off Katipunan trees

By Margaux Ortiz

ENVIRONMENTALISTS should be able to breathe easy after Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando ordered his men to lay off the trees on Katipunan Avenue.

Fernando on Monday received a copy of the temporary restraining order issued by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court on the cutting, balling or hurting of trees on the thoroughfare.

"We will still proceed with our U-turn slot project, except in areas with trees," Fernando said.

"In the meantime," he added, "the trees would stay."

But ecology groups appear not ready to rest.

Yesterday, the groups, led by Concerned Citizens Against Pollution (Cocap), came up with a resolution asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to sanction Fernando for carrying out tree-cutting activities in the area.

Ester Perez de Tagle, founder of Cocap, said Fernando not only violated a TRO but also the Constitution.

"Trees have constitutional rights. He (Fernando) can't stop us from talking and from doing what will protect our health and welfare. It is he who should be stopped from doing what is harmful to the public and the environment," De Tagle said.

She added that they would file a case against Fernando before the Ombudsman for abuse of power "by trampling on people's constitutional rights."

She said they would also ask the Congress to conduct a hearing in aid of legislation with a view to review and amend the law that created the MMDA.

"They should see how the MMDA, in the hands of a despotic public official, be an instrument of grave abuse and become a weapon of intimidation and oppression," the groups said in their resolution.

2 begin counting down days to execution anew

THE CLOCK has resumed ticking for death convicts Roberto Lara and Roderick Licayan.

Lara and Licayan, whose scheduled Jan. 30 execution was temporarily suspended by the Supreme Court, were brought back to the isolation building yesterday, according to New Bilibid Prisons Chief Penal Supt. Venancio Tesoro.

Tesoro said that according to the NBP procedure, death convicts are supposed to be put in isolation 15 days before their execution.

The two death convicts were taken out of the isolation block after the high court decided to stay their execution for 30 days.

The high court decision came on the eve of the two men's execution.

NBP Chaplain Robert Olaguer said Lara's mother Benilda, siblings and children are still not aware of his return to the isolation building.

"(Lara's family) will surely be devastated (when they learn about the news)," Olaguer said.

Margaux Ortiz

Police unit chief takes fall for his men's indiscretion

NINE lawmen, including the head of the local drug unit, were relieved of their posts for turning their own police station in Novaliches Quezon City into a virtual strip joint.

Although Supt. Nilo Wong, head of the Anti-Illegal Drugs Operations Unit was not at the Novaliches police station when his men held a wild birthday party for one of the officers on Jan. 26, he was still sacked along with eight members of his unit, according to Central Police District Office director Chief Supt. Napoleon Castro.

"(The policemen) are prevented from going to girlie bars, but what these men did was worse—they made the police station into a club," Castro said.

The eight men were PO3 Jose Usero, PO3 Jerry Villamor, PO2 Noel Magcalayo, PO2 Isagani Mateo, PO1 Michael Collado, PO1 Oliver Estrelles, PO1 Emetrio Mendoza and PO1 Edmund Paculdar.

Castro said that the men are facing summary dismissal from service.

Chief Supt. Ricardo de Leon, National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) director, reportedly threw a fit when he saw a Manila newspaper carrying the picture of a police officer in plain clothes, fondling a scantily clad young woman sitting on his lap.

Tina Santos, AFP, AP

Pay fines or be towed, MMDA warns drivers

THE METEROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando on Tuesday announced that his men are now towing the vehicles of hardheaded motorists who refused to settle their traffic violation fines.

"Motorists will be severely penalized if they continue to disregard the summons we send them," Fernando said in a press conference.

Ramon Santiago, the supervising director of the No Contact Traffic Apprehension policy of the MMDA Traffic Operations Center, said that they had sent out 26,420 summons from April to December last year.

But only 40 percent of the motorists were able to settle their fines, Santiago said.

He stressed that that they are currently towing vehicles of "recalcitrant motorists."

The director said violators are given seven days to respond to the summons.

If the violators disregard the summons, the agency would send them a second notice to which they are given seven more days to settle.

Motorists who refuse to acknowledge the summons will be fined with P5,000 and their vehicles towed.

They will also be fined P40 per day, until they redeem their vehicles from the impounding area, Santiago said.

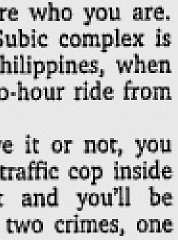
The MMDA chair also announced that the agency may soon be using banks as "more accessible" redemption centers for traffic violators.

Margaux Ortiz

What we can learn from New York

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



I READ Jarius Bondoc's column, Gotcha, at the Philippine Star with interest yesterday. The well-written piece was so interesting I read it twice.

Bondoc's topic touched on crime and law enforcement, which is everybody's concern in crime-plagued Metro Manila.

Essentially, what Bondoc said was that big crimes in a community started with minor violations committed by juvenile delinquents and even by supposedly law-abiding citizens that were left unchecked. These minor infractions could range from graffiti, littering, to beating the red light.

He cited the Broken Windows theory, expounded by American criminologists James Q. Wilson and George Kelling. Broken Windows states that "crime is the inevitable result of disorder (in a community)." If a window in a building is broken and left unrepaired, the impression from the outside is that the place is unoccupied or that the owner doesn't care. Soon more windows of the building will be shattered because nobody cares.

How true! Big crimes come from small ones. 'If the police can't handle the traffic problem, how do you expect them to handle the problem of bank robbery and kidnapping?

Lawless elements are having a heyday in Metro Manila because they know that they can get away with their crime. If policemen are not there when drunken drivers beat the red light, how can you expect them to be at the scene of a bank robbery? Unless the cops themselves are the bank robbers.

When authorities put their foot down in enforcing the law, the citizens follow.

The best example is the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority complex, where drivers follow traffic laws to the letter. In Subic, policemen apprehend you if you pass a red light, and they don't care who you are. It's like the Subic complex is outside the Philippines, when it's only a two-hour ride from Manila.

And, believe it or not, you can't bribe a traffic cop inside Subic. Try it and you'll be charged with two crimes, one for traffic violation, another for attempted bribery.

Other examples are Davao City and Puerto Princesa City. In Davao City, smoking in enclosed areas is strictly forbidden. Littering in Puerto will get one arrested.

There are less crimes in Davao City, Puerto Princesa City and inside the Subic Bay complex because would-be criminals know they can't get away with their crime. Nobody is untouchable in the cities of Davao and Puerto Princesa, and Subic.

* * *

New York City had the same problem as Metro Manila in the 1980s until it hired Kelling of the Broken Windows fame as consultant of the Transit Authority.

Kelling started cleaning the subways and subway cars of graffiti. He also arrested passengers who evaded paying train fares. The Authority didn't bother with the fare-beaters because it considered them "minor" violators. Soon, the arrested fare-beaters were found to be carrying deadly weapons that they used in mugging other train passengers.

After cleaning up the New York subway of muggers, the Transit police chief was hired by Mayor Rudy Giulianni as city police chief in 1994. Employing Broken Windows, the police chief rounded up petty extortionists and beggars. Policemen cleared the city parks of muggers and drug peddlers.

New York City under Giulianni was a safe city, a far cry from what it used to be when promenaders at Central Park, the city's biggest park, risked being mugged.

What does New York City teach us?

That cleaning up Metro Manila of kidnappers, bank robbers, rapists and drug peddlers can be done. But the authorities will have to start with illegal vendors and drivers who beat the red light.

The New York City experience also teaches us that it doesn't take a professional cop heading the police force to clear the streets of criminals. All it takes is a criminologist or one who knows the psychology of a criminal.

Why doesn't the Philippines try hiring a crime expert as Philippine National Police chief who's not necessarily from the ranks? If they do it at the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), where an outsider can be appointed director, why can't they do it at the PNP? The present chief of the NBI, Reynaldo Wycoco, is an "outsider."

METROBRIEFS

Tribal war casualty

ANOTHER man on Tuesday lost his life in a tribal war that reportedly has been going on in Taguig. According to police, residents of Maharlika Village discovered the body of a man at the Maharlika Cemetery at around 6 p.m. The man was about 28 years old and stood 4-foot-8. He was wearing a white sleeveless shirt and blue shorts. SPO4 William Dam, Taguig precinct 2 commander, said the victim died as a result of the ongoing war between Maguindanao and Maranao tribes in their municipality. ***Margaux Ortiz***

Vigilantes at large

A VIGILANTE group may have had a hand in the death of a young man whose body was found in Manila yesterday. There was a sign placed on top of the man's body that read: "*Marahas na hold-upper wag tularan* (Do not emulate this vicious robber)," according to SPO2 William Gondranios. There were welt marks around the victim's neck, indicating that he was strangled. His face was also covered with a white towel, while his hands were tied around his back. Gondranios said pedestrians discovered the body at the corner of Ick and Canon Streets in Sta. Ana, Manila at around 6 a.m. The man was around 28 years old, stood at about 5-foot-6, and has a dark, medium build. There is a tattoo of a bird in flight on his chest, police said. ***Leila Salaverria***

Pound the beat

PASIG City police officials have come up with a plan to ensure that their men are pounding the beat. On Monday, members of the local Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit began carrying log forms, where they would jot down the names of the banks they've been to while they were on patrol. Under the system, the SWAT men must also secure the countersign of bank managers or security officials. "The log-in forms would show if our men really visited banks and talked to security officers," said Senior Supt. Ernesto Catungal, city police chief. "Their presence alone would discourage robbers from pulling off anything. ***Luige del Puerto***

DepEd gets a break

DEPARTMENT of education employees took an expected break yesterday after officials were forced to suspend operations following a power outage. Salvador Gumabon, senior electrician at the DepEd-Systems Division, said the whole compound lost power shortly after 1 a.m. Wednesday. The DepEd compound's fuse and transformer bogged down, Gumabon said. "We are still checking the cause but we suspect the fuse link to be the problem." As of lunchtime yesterday, electricians from the Manila Electric Co. were still working to fix the transformer and replace the fuse. ***Luige del Puerto***

St. Augustine reunion

THE ST. Augustine School in Tanza, Cavite will hold a grand alumni homecoming on Valentine's Day at the school quadrangle. On its 35th year, the St. Augustine School will mark this year's homecoming with the theme "Let the Augustinian Spirit Soar." For details please call Almie Rose (0917) 826-0749, or visit the school principal's office.

Sabado misses you.

She barks every time I call you. She'd jump on the bed
and snuggle next to me, excited to hear your voice.

Sabado's really big now. No way she'd fit in that heart-shaped
box you placed her in so many Valentine's days ago.

It is Valentine's again and again it falls on a Saturday.

Once again, we have our date over the phone.
With Globe 40c IDD, I forget you are oceans away.

I imagine you beside me, but it's only Sabado, who's already
snoring and the sun is already rising.

We end the call but we don't say goodbye.

puppy love

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 12, 2004

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Kings vs Pistons; 8:30 a.m. (r-10 p.m.); Solar Sports; Nets vs Cavs; 7 p.m.; IBC 13 - Sacramento heads east to take on Detroit while New Jersey travels to King James' castle in Cleveland.

NBA Greatest Game - Knicks vs Heat; 12 noon; Solar Sports - For the second straight year, New York defeats Miami, for the series-clinching victory. Knicks' Guards Latrell Sprewell and Chris Childs combine for 39 points. Sprewell scores 20 of his 24 points in the first half, while Childs scores 13 of his 15 points in the second half. In a losing battle, Heat center Alonzo Mourning leads all scorers and rebounders with 29 points and 13 rebounds

Dayrit hit for oust-Buhain drive

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FORMER First Lady and badminton head Ming Ramos and tennis chief Buddy Andrada yesterday criticized the decision to submit a petition asking for the resignation of Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain.

Andrada said Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit's decision to submit the petition straight to Malacañang also ran contrary to the suggestion of Frank Elizalde, the International Olympic Committee representative to the country.

"It appeared that they are not following Elizalde's advice," Andrada told the INQUIRER. "I thought the issue was finished already when Frank spoke."

Andrada, who is one of the looming contenders for the POC presidency later this year, also frowned on the ouster move, saying, "I think it's better to prepare for the Southeast Asian Games next year instead of asking people to resign."

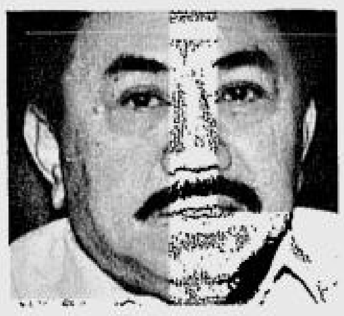
Dayrit earlier said he has already endorsed the petition to President Arroyo last weekend after their make-or-break meeting last Thursday, the same day Buhain asked for a dialogue.

Ramos also voiced out her concern over the PSC-NSA row and hit Dayrit for endorsing the letter.

"Cito is like that, when he doesn't like somebody he tries to kick that person out, like what happened to (her daughter) Cristy (Jalasco, the former POC president)," said Ramos.

"When you are asking for transparency, then you should be transparent yourself, you can't be one-sided," said Ramos, in reaction to the group's call for transparency in the PSC.

RAMOS



ANDRADA

She was referring to the sponsorship deals forged by the POC. "We don't know anything about it," she said.

Meanwhile, Buhain shrugged off the issue, saying he won't fuel the row further by questioning Dayrit's sincerity especially since the POC chief even showed up in the meeting last Monday. "I just hope he (Dayrit) finds peace," Buhain said.

Buhain said Monday's meeting with the NSA heads, including those who have an ax to grind against him, has been set as early as Thursday in an attempt to defuse the tension between the NSAs and the PSC regarding the delay of their financial assistance.

The petition, signed by 13 disgruntled NSAs, was submitted last Friday by Dayrit. It asked for Buhain to step down on account of his alleged incompetency, among other things.

ZOBEL POLO CUP

Jun Juban and Jose Constantino of the Greens play defense, while Dino Santos and Jack Clark of the Blues look on during the Jacobo Zobel Polo Cup recently at the Manila Polo Club. The Green team of Juban, Constantino, Fazi Filipi, Omar Tiwana and Osang Yulo edged the Blues, 4-3.

Welcoat thanks fans, is not quitting PBL

By Dennis U. Eroa

WELCOAT Paints, a PBL pillar, isn't quitting the league despite the controversial Platinum Cup best-of-five championship series won by Fash Laundry Power recently.

"We lost the championship, but we came out of the series with our integrity intact. The outpouring of support from Welcoat fans was overwhelming," said co-owner Raymund Yu. "We're proud and happy losers."

Co-owner Terry Que said they didn't feel as bad as others would have expected due to the warmth of the fans.

"Of course, we wanted to win the title, but we learned a lot from losing. The fans never left us and that was really heartwarming," added Que.

Yu admitted that Fash wanted it 'more' and congratulated team owner Cecilio Pedro, coach Junel Baculi, the players and the utility men for a job well done.

"Mr. Pedro is my idol," Yu said. He also made special mention of the heady plays of former Welcoat pointguard Eugene Tan and the heroics of swingman Larry Fonacier in the deciding fifth game of the best-of-five title series witnessed by an overflowing crowd.

Yu and Que said they are fielding a highly competitive squad in the next conference.

"We owe it to the fans to give them wonderful games. The PBL is an excellent vehicle for promoting our product so there's no need for us to quit," said Yu. "Remember there are lots of talents today."

Reavis all set to sign deal anew with Coke Tigers

Abuda, Antonio, Wainwright get extensions

By June Navarro

EXCEPT for the tallest dribbler in the lineup, the Coca-Cola Tigers have already signed up all of their players whose contracts expired at the start of the year.

Rafi Reavis, the tallest Coca-Cola player at 6-foot-8, has reportedly agreed on the basic terms of his two-year pact with the Tigers except for the bonus and incentive scheme.

"I see no problem on the contract of Reavis. Bonuses *at* incentives *na lang ang* under negotiation," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes.

Reyes added the handlers of Reavis are set to meet with the Tigers' management today to put the finishing touches on the pact. Reyes said Reavis should sign for the Tigers to meet the deadline on the submission of lineups today as set by the PBA Commissioner's Office.

Veterans Freddie Abuda, William Antonio and Rob Wainwright already received contract extensions, boosting the chances of the Tigers to take another shot at the title after capturing the PBA Reinforced Conference crown two months back.

REAVIS

ABUDA

Team management declined to reveal the terms of their contracts. Sources, however, bared Abuda, Antonio and Wainwright were given at least two years each.

Jec Chia and Gilbert Lao will also be back for the Tigers, while the team's newest acquisition, Gary David, is set to don Coca-Cola's jersey beginning with the PBA Fiesta Conference on Feb. 22.

David, picked 10th overall by the Tigers in the rookie draft, inked a deal worth a little over P2.1 million spread in two years.

"It took a while for these guys to finalize their contracts because of the turnover of officials within the team," said Reyes, who recently won the PBA Press Corps Coach of the Year award for the second straight season.

Hector Calma, one of the league's 25 greatest players, was appointed Coca-Cola team manager last week, replacing Jess Macias who handled the Tigers' basketball operations for a year.

Reyes said the Tigers didn't involve themselves in the trade negotiations as the management is keen on keeping their championship roster intact.

"Why change a winning formula? The philosophy is to simply keep last year's lineup intact," added Reyes, whose Tigers saw action in four straight Finals appearances dating back to the 2002 All-Filipino Cup.

Meanwhile, Sta. Lucia Realty completed its lineup by signing up rookies Ronald Cuan to the tune of P3 million and Nelbert Omolon for P2.7 million over two-and-a-half years.

Omolon, a 6-foot-3 powerforward out of Philippine Christian University, will get a monthly take of P80,000 on the first 18 months and P110,000 on the final year.

Espiritu gains in Tour de Langkawi

MELAKA, Malaysia—Victor Espiritu took up the cudgels for the Philippine Pagcor team by moving up in the Asian Classification after the fifth stage of the Tour de Langkawi here on Tuesday.

Espiritu swapped places with countryman Ryan Tanguilig after ranking 49th overall in the stage and grabbing seventh place. He is 8 minutes and 24 seconds off Asian Classification leader Ghader Mizbani. Tanguilig is just 6 seconds off Espiritu.

Japanese Iijima Makamoto, who ranked 26th overall in the 18-kilometer individual time trial race, trails Mazbani at second place.

Canadian Eric Wohlberg conquered the flat roads of this historic city by the sea as he submitted the best clocking of 21:38.74 even as Makamoto clocked one minute and 18 seconds behind to become the best Asian placer.

Mizbani finished second to Makamoto in the stage with his accumulated time of 14:10:30, enough to retain the top spot in the Asian classification.

While the Filipino riders failed to reap individual dividends, their collective efforts paid off as Alfie Catalan finally counted for the team.

Catalan submitted the eighth-best Asian clocking (23 minutes and 53.10 seconds) as Team Pagcor moved to fourth place in the team competitions, just 56 seconds behind China. Not far behind are Japan and Iran at first and second places, respectively.

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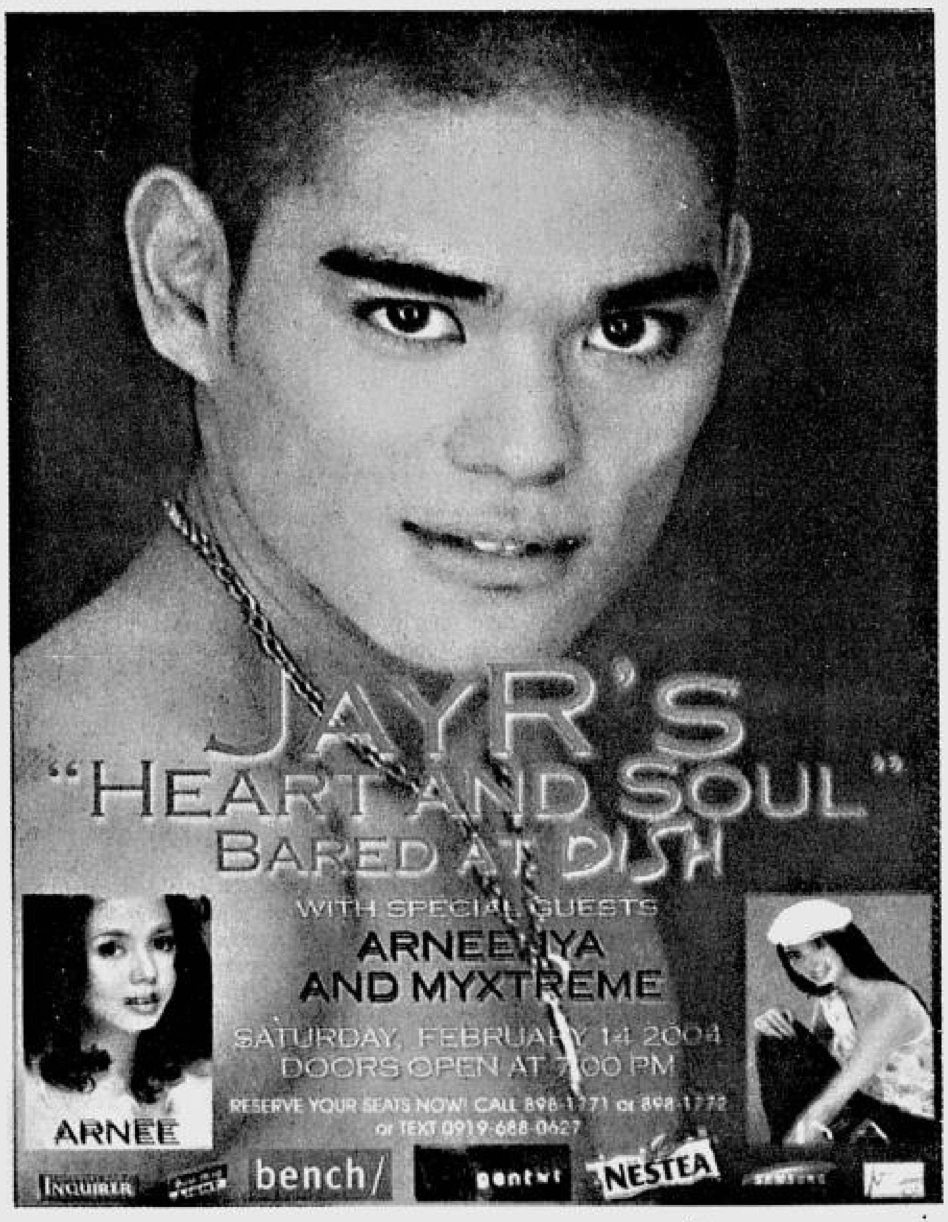


BEST COPY AVAILABLE

UM Wildcats join 'Tryouts ng Bayan' in Davao

By Roy Luarca

DAVAO CITY—University of Mindanao players led the first batch of aspirants yesterday in the second stop of the RP-Cebuana Lhuillier "Tryouts ng Bayan" at the Almendras Gym here.

Eight Wildcats, including starters Louie Medalla, Eder Saldua, Jasper Callo and Leo Berondo, showed up with 28 others as they bid to become members of the national pool.

The number is expected to swell today as the national coaching staff, headed by Dong Vergeire and Boyzie Zamar, has received numerous inquiries for the three-hour tryouts slated to start at 9 a.m.

Though many of the hopefuls were high school players, deputy coaches Beujing Acot and Arsenio Dysangco noted some with potentials, including two 14-year-old point guards.

Standouts from the Holy Cross of Davao, Ateneo de Davao, Sta. Ana National High and Agro-Industrial Foundation College have also bared their intention to join the tryouts or the afternoon basketball clinic being conducted by the coaching staff with assistance from national cagers Ricky Calimag, Richie Melencio, Dennis Madrid and Celino Cruz.

More than 70 youngsters aged 12-17 joined the free clinic yesterday which is serving as part of the Basketball Association of the Philippines' outreach program.

BAP regional director Regino "Boy" Cua is coordinating the Tryouts ng Bayan here, which is expected to equal if not surpass the inaugural stop in Cagayan de Oro Monday and Tuesday.

The two-month, city-hopping tryouts is being bankrolled by Cebuana Lhuillier through AVP/GM Jean Henri Lhuillier, team manager of the Philippine team.

Veteran writer Vic Sai, also the Philippine Sports Commission coordinator for Davao, was around during the tryouts with local sportswriters.

An instant press conference was held right at the gym with Vergeire, explaining the mission and vision behind the launching of the country's most comprehensive and extensive search for basketball talents ever.

The RP-Cebuana Lhuillier will leave for Sultan Kudarat tomorrow for the third stop of the tryouts which will cover 22 key cities/provinces.

New Jersey rips Detroit, posts No. 9

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Richard Jefferson had 27 points and 10 rebounds Tuesday as the New Jersey Nets rallied to beat the Detroit Pistons, 89-78, for their ninth straight win— eighth in a row under new coach Lawrence Frank.

Jason Kidd added 16 points, nine rebounds and nine assists in a gritty 43-minute performance as New Jersey overcame a 13-point first-quarter deficit and improved to 8-0 under Frank. The 33-year-old replaced Byron Scott more than two weeks ago as the coach of the two-time defending Eastern Conference champs.

Kenyon Martin added 13 points and eight rebounds and Kerry Kittles had 17 points as the Nets posted their ninth straight double-digit win and sent the Pistons to their fourth straight loss.

Chauncey Billups had 23 points and Richard Hamilton added 19 for Detroit, which made only 18 field goals in the final three quarters after making 12 in the first, when it shot 54.5 percent in taking a 29-16 lead.

In Miami, Shaquille O'Neal had 25 points and Derek Fisher came off the bench to score eight of his season-high 18 points in the fourth quarter and help the Los Angeles Lakers beat Miami, 98-83.

O'Neal scored 19 of his points in the second half on 9-for-12 shooting, and the Lakers overcame an early 14-point deficit.

Dwyane Wade had 19 points for Miami, which dropped its fifth straight—the team's worst slide since opening the season with seven consecutive losses. Miami (21-32) is now a season-worst 11 games under .500.

The Lakers were again without All-Star guard Kobe Bryant, who missed his seventh game because of a lacerated right index finger.

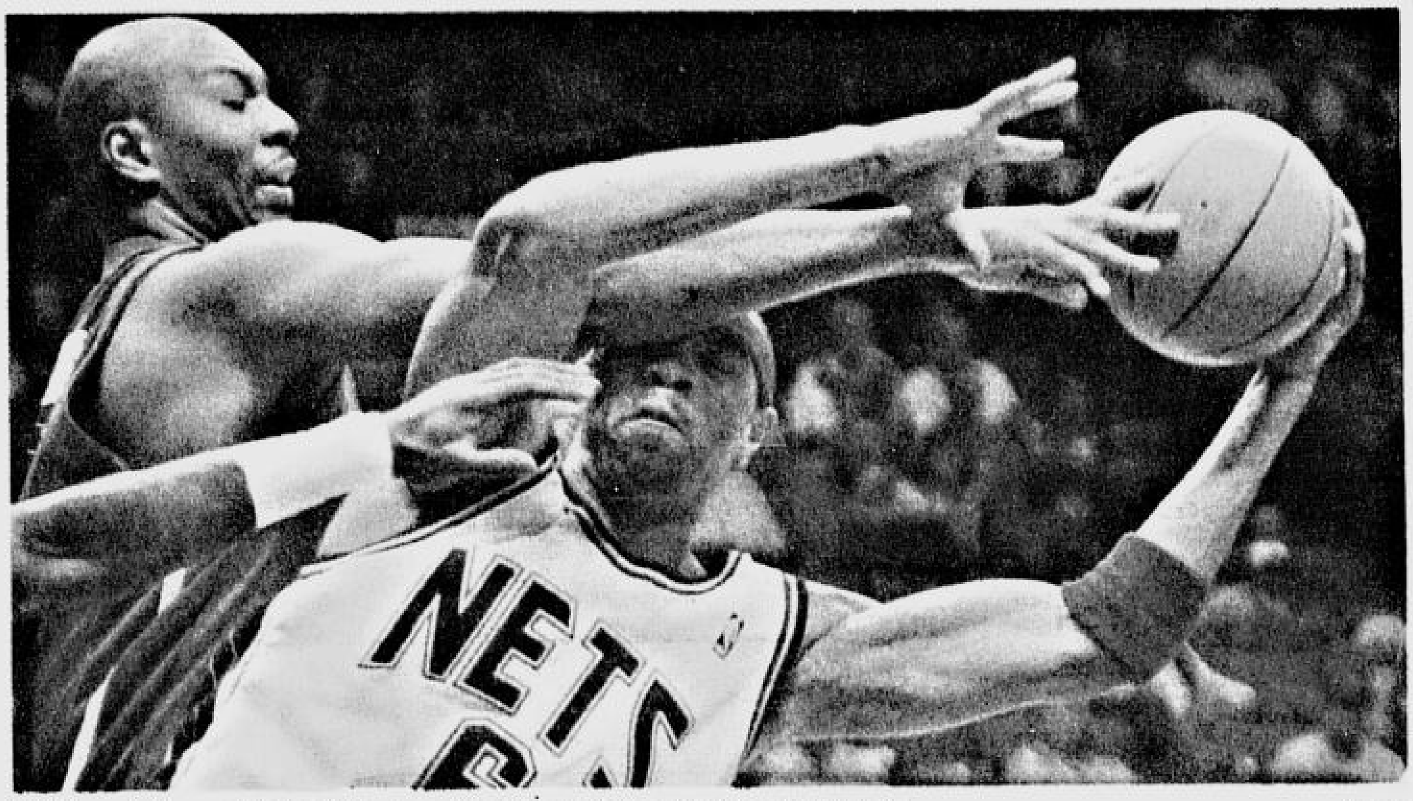
In Minneapolis, Kevin Garnett was one rebound short of a double-double in the first quarter and finished with 31 points and 16 rebounds to lead Minnesota over the Los Angeles Clippers, 96-84.

Ayers fired

Meanwhile, Randy Ayers was fired by the struggling Philadelphia 76ers during his first season as their coach, and assistant Chris Ford was promoted to replace him Tuesday.

Philadelphia went 21-31 under Ayers and is 1 1/2 games behind the Boston Celtics for the final playoff berth in the Eastern Conference. *AP*

Complete results: LA Lakers 98, Miami 83; New Jersey 89, Detroit 78; Sacramento 124, Milwaukee 117; Minnesota 96, LA Clippers 84; Indiana 103, Chicago 84; Dallas 105, New York 90; Utah 86, Portland 81; Golden State 106, Seattle 97; Toronto 101, Phoenix 94



NEW Jersey's Kenyon Martin (6) tries to pass the ball as Detroit's Elden Campbell defends. REUTERS

Southwoods heads Ladies Fil-Am cast

CLUBS from Metro Manila and Bacolod are seeing action in the inaugural Ladies Fil-Am Invitational golf tournament on Feb. 16-21 at the Baguio Country Club and the Camp John Hay courses in Baguio.

Manila Southwoods, bannered by Tracy Locsin and Glenda da Roza, heads the list of 13 teams of five players each in the weeklong tourney designed to boost the ladies golf movement in the country.

The host venues, BCC and John Hay, are joining hands to stage the female version of the annual Fil-Am, one of the world's biggest tournaments which is held early in December.

Sponsors of the ladies Fil-Am are Smart Communications, PCSO, Pagcor, Wilson, WH Consultants, Rustan's, Equitable-PCIBank, Information Professionals Inc. and Nivea.

The field will be bracketed according to their average handicap levels in the "Fil" and "Am" divisions. All play 72 holes using the Modified Stableford (Molave) scoring system.

Already in the roster aside from Southwoods are teams from Baguio Country Club, Camp John Hay, Philippine Navy, Alabang, Victorias and Negros Occidental in Bacolod, Alabang, Riviera and Forest Hills.

More entries are expected to come in as the organizing committee finalizes the preparations for the competitions.

The Southwoods squad is expected to be bannered by Locsin and Da·Roza, who had won the BMW national finals and represented the country in the Portugal international championship.

Though participation in the first staging of the Ladies Fil-Am can hardly compare with the men's tourney, organizers are optimistic that can become as big in the coming years because of the allure of the two courses.

Maybe in near future, Gopez tells 'kabalens'

SAYING the sudden transfer of the DHL-Philippine Open from Mimosa to another course was an opportunity lost in triggering a tourism boom in Pampanga, National Golf Association of the Philippines secretary general Benny Gopez yesterday expressed hope that the province would still be given the chance in the future.

A day after Mimosa officially waived its right to host the Open, Gopez wrote an open letter to the people and golfers of Pampanga in reaction to sentiments from various sectors.

"It was our noble intention to present the prestigious Philippine Open to Pampanga by way of also helping trigger a tourism boom in the home province of President Macapagal-Arroyo," said Gopez. "DHL went out of its way to have the Philippine Open held in Pampanga. But unfortunately, for reasons beyond our control, it did not materialize."

The 88th staging of the Open, which will have a pot of $150,000 (about P8.4 million) put up by DHL, will now be held on Feb. 26-29 at the Langer course of the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite.

In his letter, Gopez said that since they signed the hosting contract five months ago, his team had regularly visited Mimosa to make recommendations on how it can become presentable for the 150 golfers worldwide coming for the Open.

Gopez, himself a *Kapampangan*, ended the letter by vowing to bring the Open again to "our beloved province of Pampanga." *Jong Arcano*

Pasa meeting urged

FORMER Philippine Amateur Swimming Association head Eddie Ledesma yesterday urged the Pasa to convene in a board meeting to address the various issues hounding the organization.

Ledesma said that among those to be tackled are the Pasa's present leadership's disapproval of the elite training program set up by the Philippine Sports Commission under an unauthorized coach and the complaints of swimmers regarding training and preparation for their tournaments.

Ledesma added that the board has not yet convened since his predecessor Chito Ilagan announced his appointees under his new administration. Ilagan succeeded Ledesma in November 2002.

"No meeting has occurred so far, there was no convening of the board," said Ledesma. "I don't know when any meeting will be called."

Trina Ibarle

Sports Illustrated

SWIMSUIT MODEL. Tennis player and model Anna Kournikova attends an event to promote Sports Illustrated's 2004 swimsuit issue Tuesday in New York. Kournikova is featured in this year's issue. AP

Ominous at Mimosa

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE SIGN was ominous.

When the Media/Officials Tournament for the DHL-88th Philippine Open was held two weeks or so ago at Mimosa, all the participants failed to complete their round. Our 18 holes was reduced to 9. Reason: Heavy human traffic, imported from South Korea, snarled play at No. 10.

I saw disappointment written on the faces of the Media/Officials Tournament participants, many of them ruing the fact that they had risen from bed at dawn to make it to Mimosa on time—only to see their day spoiled by the abortion of the round. This is not to mention that some had their day off just to spend precious hours on the course. You know how it feels to a golfer spending much of the day on the course: heaven. To a golfer, it's always better to have a bad day in the golf course than having a good day in the office.

But of all the participants that day, the one with the longest face when play was shortened to 9 holes was Charles Brewer, the DHL country manager whose robust support for the Open saw him plunk out $150,000 for the tournament set for Feb. 26-29.

But credit it to the fortitude of this fellow Beatlemaniac that when Charles was told the round would be canceled "or we'd be on the golf course till 6 in the evening due to the volume of players playing that day," he readily relented.

"OK, if it'd be wise to cancel the last nine, then by all means, let's cancel it, mate," Charles said, grinning his usual infectious grin.

After I had composed myself over this most recent shock at Mimosa, I said then to myself that Mimosa seemed not destined, if not ready, to host the DHL Open.

Some months back, a similar ominous sign happened. A team from the organizing NGAP had gone there to inspect the course. When the team members reported for their tee time at 9 a.m. on the first tee box, they were stopped.

"Oh, no, you can't tee off yet," said the starter. "You don't have a ball on the tee."

The team tried to argue its case. It said the time was 8:49 a.m. and tee off time for the team had been set at 9 a.m.

It was an exercise in futility.

"The first one to place a ball on the tee is the first to tee off," said the starter.

A compromise was struck out: The NGAP team would tee off on the 10th tee. Same result: some flights, mostly peopled by Koreans, had placed their balls on the tee box ahead of the NGAP team. The NGAP team could not be squeezed in.

Exasperated, the team left, disappointed over its inability to inspect the course.

On the way home, I had this creepy feeling the DHL Open would not be held at Mimosa. It was backstopped later by repeated misadventures of the same team that kept coming back to check on the development of sprucing up activities supposedly agreed upon to be initiated by Mimosa as requested by the NGAP. Slowly but surely, Mimosa would soon fade out of the picture.

True enough, my premonition came out true.

On Tuesday, Feb. 10, the DHL Open was moved to Riviera after Dr. Emmanuel Angeles, the big boss at Clark Development Corp., had pulled Mimosa out. He called me up that day to break the news himself. He sounded in his usual nice and cordial manners:

"Since it was deemed that our course is unfit for play, we deemed it wise to cancel the DHL Open at Mimosa," said Dr. Angeles. "We did not want an embarrassing situation as to spoil the Open, thus our decision to back out."

Said a friend of mine: "A sad day for Philippine golf."

I had no immediate answer to that.

Looking back now, it seemed it was written in the stars that Mimosa wasn't meant to host the DHL Open. You get stymied the first time you try to connect with a course picked to host the fabled Open, that surely was the trigger. You get bad vibes while trying to reach first base, why that's a surefire fuel for doomsday.

Bye Mimosa, hello Riviera.

But mind you, Riviera is no second fiddle.

Riviera's heritage is legend. For one, it was there that the much-admired Frankie Miñoza won his first and only RP Open in 1998, allowing him to break a jinx that saw him suffer miseries in the Open for nearly two decades prior to 1998. For another, the 1998 Open at Riviera was one of the best ever staged since the tournament's birth in 1913. That's why two years later, Riviera became the millennium host of the Open in 2000.

One good thing deserves another.

But who said love would not be lovelier the third time around?

The loveless maybe.

Andre hurdles unknown foe

SAN JOSE, California—Andre Agassi beat Irakli Labadze of the Republic of Georgia, 7-6 (7), 6-4, Tuesday in a difficult first-round match at the Siebel Open.

"That was an awkward match," said Agassi. "He served pretty good and I couldn't quite get over the hump in breaking his serve, and that's when the match gets dangerous."

The second-seeded Agassi recorded the only service break in the match to go up 4-3 in the second set. Agassi won 91 percent of his first serve points with seven aces, while Labadze won 77 percent of his first serve points, including nine aces.

Agassi, ranked fifth, now has 792 wins in a career that includes 58 titles. Agassi turned pro in 1986, when Labadze was five years old.

Third-seeded Mardy Fish won for the first time this season, beating qualifier and fellow American Alex Reichel, 6-1, 6-4.

Fish, ranked 21st, will meet Denmark's Kenneth Carlsen in the second round. Carlsen beat Austria's Jurgen Melzer, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3, earlier in the day.

Gabi risks WBC title vs Thai

By Salven L. Lagumbay,
Contributor

WORLD Boxing Council International flyweight champ Diosdado Prince Gabi will make the first defense of his crown on April 17 against undefeated Duangpetch Nakornthong-Parkvill of Thailand at the University of Baguio gym in Baguio City.

"It's final. The new date we've set is April 17 and we're getting a tough Thai opponent for Gabi," said promoter Raffy Panagan.

The Kidapawan City-based Gabi, a talented southpaw who boasts of a 24-2-1 win-loss-draw record with 19 KOs, is fresh from his victory over Randy Mangubat last Nov. 9 in Kidapawan City. Now ranked WBC No. 14 and IBF No. 12, Gabi hopes to notch a win in his first defense as a ticket to a planned stint at the Kronk Gym of legendary trainer Emmanuel Steward.

The Thai has a record of 24 wins, no loss, and 1 draw.

Gabi's fight in Baguio City is backed by PCSO, Pagcor, San Miguel Corp., Beneco, Emperador Brandy, Smart, Club John Hay, Jadewell Parking Systems, Centermall, Baguio Water District, DRJ at your service Training Center, R and R Corp., Bonanza Bingo and Arlin's Amusement Center.

SPORTSWATCH

Woods joins Buick

SAN DIEGO—Forget the streaks and statistics that identify the best two players in golf. The real comparison starts now. Tiger Woods teed off at dawn Tuesday with a full moon fading over the Pacific Ocean. The Buick Invitational is his first PGA Tour event since he left Kapalua a month ago. He's been gone so long that caddie Steve Williams spent much of the morning applying sandpaper to the grips of a new set of irons. Woods finished his round on the South course at Torrey Pines about the time Vijay Singh sauntered over to the 10th tee on the North course to start his practice round. They could not have been farther apart, but at least they're in the same tournament. Singh has been the talk of the tour the last couple of months as he moves closer to No. 1 in the world, a position only Woods has occupied since winning the '99 PGA Championship at Medinah. The Fijian has 12 consecutive finishes in the top 10, the longest streak since Jack Nicklaus' 14 in 1977. *AP*

LPGA backs Annika

PHOENIX—Despite swarming galleries wherever she goes, Michelle Wie faces an uphill climb to rival Annika Sorenstam in the eyes of the LPGA. Commissioner Ty Votaw said Tuesday the Hawaiian teenager has some growing to do before she reaches Sorenstam's elite status. "She hasn't won 48 times, she's not in the LPGA Hall of Fame and she hasn't won six Vare trophies," Votaw said. "She hasn't had a career Grand Slam, she hasn't been Player of the Year multiple times in a 10-year period. But, if she continues to develop as a person and a player, she has a vast amount of potential to match those accomplishments." The 14-year-old Wie and 33-year-old Sorenstam will compete in the same field for the third time when the Safeway International takes place next month at Superstition Mountain, a new venue east of downtown. *AP*

Roligon tilt today

A TOUGH cast of participants composed of derby champions will see action in Roligon Mega Cockpit's 14th Anniversary 7-Cock Derby today. With 134 fights scheduled, the derby will start promptly at 12 noon. Promoted by Roligon owner Rolly Ligon and sponsored by Thunderbird Enertone, the event attracted a total of 325 entries. A guaranteed prize of P3.6 million is at stake. Among the qualifiers who tallied three victories each were Bert Arizobal, Carlos Pimentel, Boy Marzo, Madison Go, Dax Guanzon, Emitt San Juan, Allan Tan, James Uy, tabloid executive Rey Briones, Allan Siaco, Joseph Chuazon, Bro Ed, Jojo Bacar, Nonoy Gonzales, Gerry Perez and RGEP Ilarde, William Tan and Eddie Araneta, Pol and Boy Royo, Norberto Tanongon, Larry Malihan and Erwin Diamante, among others. Meanwhile, the "Sibuyas King" 4-Cock Derby is all set on Tuesday, Feb. 17, also at Roligon. The cash prize at stake is P400,000, while entry fee is P11,000, according to Renato Shio and the Flower Group. For inquiries, please contact 852-9812-, 852-9774, 833-2275, 833-1638 and 0920-3074225.

Aerobics marathon

A SPORTS aerobics marathon for students 15 years old and above will be held at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Valentine's Day, at the University of Assumption indoor gym in San Fernando City, Pampanga. The marathon, which is part of the Globe Gentxt Invasion in Pampanga, will feature three categories—male, female and team trio. Ms Ley Fernandez, secretary general of the Philippine International Competitive Aerobics Federation (Picaf), will serve as head judge and clinic director. She will be assisted by national aerobics athletes, who will act as presenters and supervise the all-students Valentine's Day competition. A clinic will be conducted for qualified PE teachers and PE majors after the marathon. Interested parties may either contact area coordinator and former Toyota basketball star Gil Cortez at 045-9613617 and 045-9615675 local 101 or Team Ventures Inc., the event management specialist, at 5225953 and 4009745.

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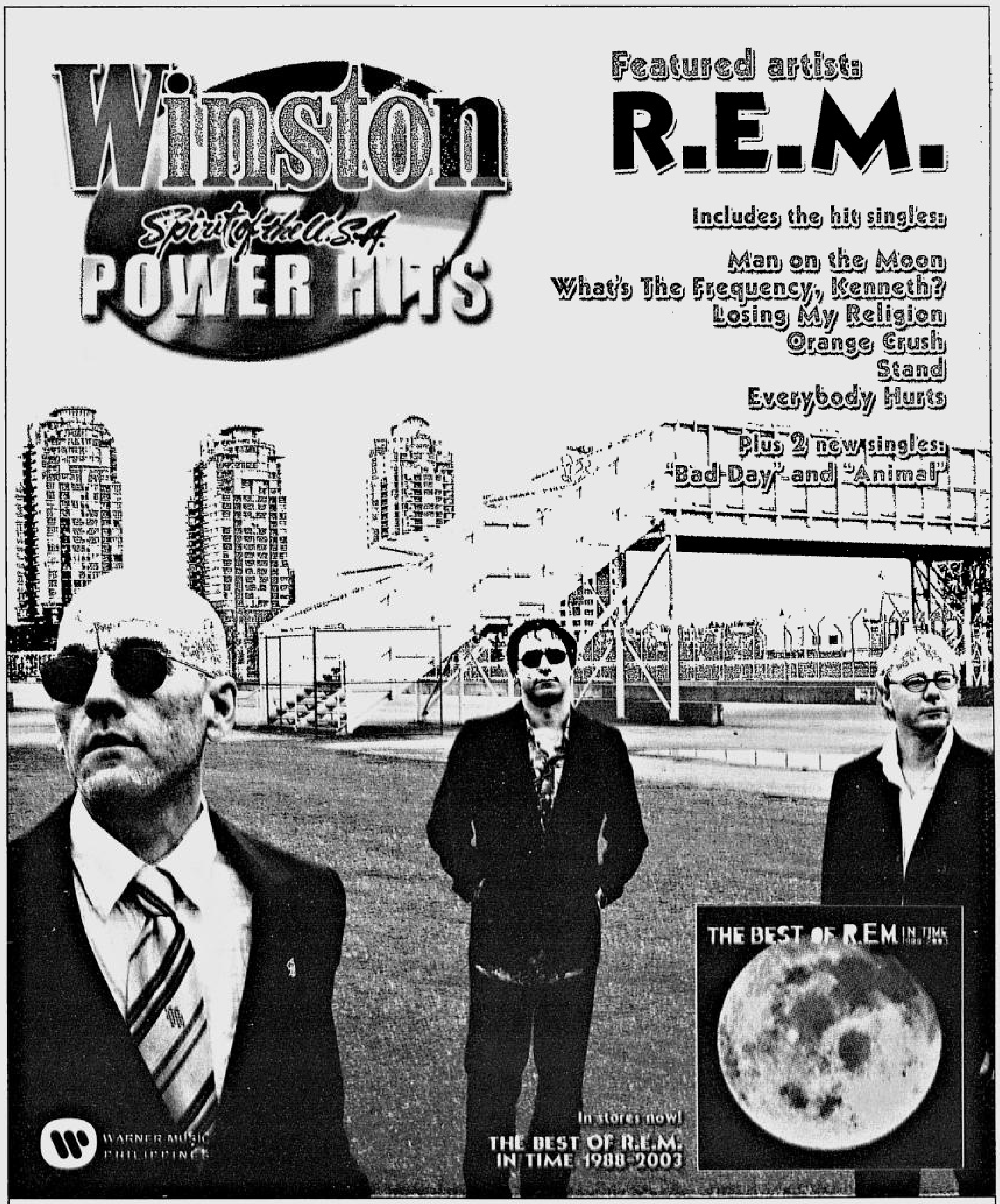

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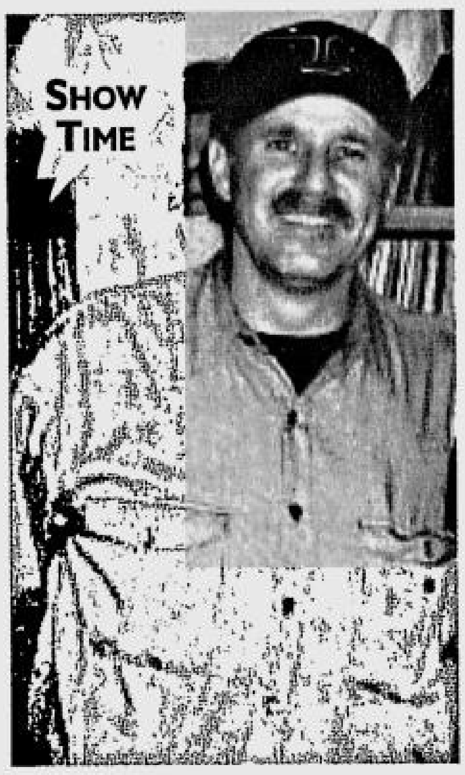

JOHN FORD COLEY IN MANILA

Grammy nominee and pop rock legend John Ford Coley returns to Manila for a special one-night Valentine concert titled, "Retro Love." The concert will be held at 8:30 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum. Tickets to "Retro Love" are available at SM Ticketnet outlets in all SM department store branches (911-5555). For more details, call 551-7777.

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2 **MONA LISA SMILE** 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40 DOLBY

3 **GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE** 11:05, 12:55, 2:45, 4:35, 6:25, 8:15, 10:00 DOLBY

4 **WISHING STAIRS** 10:10, 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40 DOLBY

5 **MAGIC KITCHEN** 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50 DOLBY

6 **HAUNTED MANSION** 10:40, 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, 6:40, 8:35, 10:00 SDDS

7 **CHASING LIBERTY** 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50 DTS

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1 **MONA LISA SMILE** 11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00 DOLBY

2 **HAUNTED MANSION** 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00 SDDS

3 **MILAN** 10:10, 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00 DOLBY

4 **CHASING LIBERTY** 10:25, 12:50, 3:35, 6:20, 9:05 DIGITAL

5 **MAGIC KITCHEN** 11:50, 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10 DIGITAL

6 **WISHING STAIRS** 11:50, 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10 DOLBY

7 **MILAN** 12:35, 3:25, 6:15, 9:05 DTS

8 **GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE** 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00 DOLBY

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW
935-3229 / 31

1 **HAUNTED MANSION** 11:00, 12:50, 2:45, 4:40, 6:35, 8:30 DOLBY DIGITAL

2 **CHASING LIBERTY** 11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:30 DOLBY

3 **THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE** 11:35, 1:40, 3:45, 5:50, 8:20 DOLBY

4 **MONA LISA SMILE** 12:00, 2:25, 4:45, 7:10, 9:00 DOLBY

5 **MILAN** 10:10, 11:55, 2:40, 5:25, 8:15

6 **GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE** 11:35, 1:40, 3:45, 5:50, 8:10 DOLBY

7 **WISHING STAIRS** 11:35, 1:40, 3:45, 5:50, 8:20 DOLBY

8 **MAGIC KITCHEN** 11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:30

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4 IN THE CUT
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2 THE LAST SAMURAI
3 IN THE CUT
4 THE WISHER
5 MILAN

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1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 MILAN
3 MILAN
4 CHASING LIBERTY
5 THE HAUNTED MANSION

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2 IN THE CUT
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4 MILAN
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Noontime shows up for revamp

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

HOW true are rumors that "Masayang Tanghaling Bayan (MTB)" will soon be axed? ABS-CBN is said to be planning radical changes in the lunchtime slot. I guess it's high time for noontime TV shows to offer something more than the usual skimpily-clad dancers & sexual innuendoes.

Could it also be true that "Eat Bulaga" might move to ABC 5? Sometimes, it's the show and not the channel that matters. The longest running noontime show will never lose its captive audience wherever it's airing. As my mom used to say, "In a world full of copies, here's to the originals!"

Ogie unperturbed

Ogie Alcasid remains unperturbed by all the other Valentine shows that he and **Regine Velasquez** will be colliding head-on on Feb. 14. With the many V-day shows in town, it's as if all the lovers' hearts will collide on Valentine's and cause a major cardiac explosion!

Sans frills, Ogie is confident that it's simply the music that Regine and he have done together that's the highlight of "The Songbird & the Songwriter." He adds, "It's the very first time I'll be doing a back-to-back concert, so it's really going to be something else."

The sentimental balladeer singles out "All My Life" and "For The First Time" as his favorite love songs of all time. If he didn't have a V-day show with Regine, he would have wanted to watch the show of **Basil Valdez, Kuh Ledesma and Zsa Zsa Padilla**, and also the show of his *Kumpareng* **Janno.**

Ogie will have a post-Valentine's celebration with his wife **Michelle**, and their two daughters in Australia.

"I'm working hard for them so I know Michelle understands why I can't be with them on Valentine's Day. At this point in my life, love for me means complete devotion."

Day job for Donna Cruz

I HEARD that **Donna Cruz-Larrazabal** is now into website designing. She has opted for a quiet life in Cebu with her husband Dr. **Yong Larrazabal** and their two kids **Belle**, 4, and **Cian, 1.**

The former teen star/singer earned a Bachelor degree in Computer Science from a home study program spearheaded by Cebu Doctor's College. It's her insomnia, aside from her interest in web designing, that keeps her online almost all night. Even her husband is impressed with the intensive information that Donna 'put into the website of his eye clinic (www.sightfirstclinic.com), which she had designed and now maintains.

Grandma Liza Lorena

LIZA Lorena has always been a character! I like that in a woman. She's so excited about the coming of her grandchild courtesy of **Glydel Mercado**, who will wed Liza's son, **Tonton Gutierrez** next month. If plans don't miscarry, their wedding will coincide with Ton's b-day.

To prepare for the wedding she even had liposuction done by **Dr. Vicki Belo.** Aside from that, the proud grandma-to-be also tried out Dr. Vicki's "aptos thread"—a revolutionary procedure for facials. Who says you have to look like a grandma even if you are already one?

Frogpad to Manila

BASED in Bordeaux, France, the trio Frogpad emerged in recent years as a strong electronic pop force. French music mixers **Vince** and **Eric**, both obsessed with synthesizers and computers, met their would-be vocalist **Liza** during their five-year stay here in the Philippines. Together, their diverse music reflects a cross-cultural flavor that has become one of Europe's most sought after club sound experiences.

The release of their debut album "Scheme" in 2002 allowed the group to spread their music to wider audiences. Basic lyrics and the eclectic use of sound and different styles shape the groups' tracks that aim to affect and move listeners.

Neo-eighties sound... electronica... pop... you now have the chance to decide in which category their music fits. All you have to do is be part of the scheme.

Catch force Frogpad via Shematic Electronic sessions, along with Rubber Inc. and Flow-44 at Republic of Malate at 9 p.m. on Feb 21. Erg Vodka Mix Open Bar from 10 p.m.-11 p.m. Sound by Sweetspot. Also supported by Essensuals' Toni and Guy for styling and makeup, Pulp Magazine, MTV Ink and NU 107. Admission is free. Laissez.

Personal:

BIRTHDAY kisses to a dear family friend... **Fanny Serrano.** I'm happy that the friendship that my mom and you started lives on through us.

Birthday Cheers to one friend I can never live without... **Ambet Nabus!**

A.S, thanks for not dodging Cupid's 2nd attempt. Happy Heart's (no more hurts) Day!!

For Feedback E-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband@yahoo.com

F4 heartthrob in film debut

SHOW TIME

CHENG Xu is his Chinese screen name.

But Jerry Yan of F4 fame is undoubtedly better known outside Taiwan, including the Philippines, as Dao Ming Si, the character he plays in the chinovela "Meteor Garden."

At 26, Jerry is also considerably the hottest heartthrob of F4 as proven by his legions of fans, who follow him wherever he performs solo in any country in Asia.

Now, his star shines even brighter with the release of his debut film, "Magic Kitchen." Yan plays the role of an assistant cook who falls in love with the head chef, played by the very beautiful Sammi Cheng.

"I like my character in the film," says Yan. "It's the opposite of what I used to portray in the TV series. This time, I am an ordinary guy who goes after an extraordinary girl. The story is about one-third cooking and two-thirds about finding true love. That's why the audience can expect a lot of romantic scenes and some hilarious situations."

"Magic Kitchen" also stars Maggie Q, Nicola Cheung and Andy Lau. Its theme song was sung by Jerry Yan. The movie, released by First Film, opens in Metro Manila theaters for the Valentine season.

Recording artist . . .

From page A25

"So I am used to watching the movies, and that's why I know how important movies are to the ordinary Filipino citizens. Filipinos are fond of movies, fond of singers and fond of having their own homes," she said.

The President's eldest son, Mickey, is a movie actor. He told Inquirer Entertainment in a past interview that his mother considers a career in show biz a decent profession.

The President switched from addressing the entertainers and the representatives of 3,500 families given socialized housing in the former Camp Eldridge here to signing a proclamation converting the military camp into a housing site for the landless families..

"These two things that we did today are examples of the change that the underprivileged Filipinos are looking for—livelihood and housing," she said.

She said her administration was the "most housing-friendly administration in the history of our country." Then she asked the audience to vote for her.

"*Para sa kinabukasan, walang kapantay, walang kapalit ang karanasan at yan ang inihahandog natin sa inyong lahat* (For the future, nothing compares to experience, which I am offering to you)," she said.

Sarah Geronimo is part of this future. At 15, she is one of the youngest artists in the local music industry, whose bright future has been cemented by her triple platinum debut album.

"The singer's life is (dependent) on royalties from record sales," she said. "If there are no royalties, there will be no recording. If there is piracy, producers will not produce records. This (Optical-Media Law) was explained to me by my parents and by Ate Regine (Velasquez).

"She became a big star because of her records," Sara said, referring to Regine who is her idol. "If there is no recording industry, there will be no new artists like myself. *Wala ng* Sarah Geronimo. *Hanggang* amateur singing contests *na lang tayo* (There will be no Sarah Geronimo. We will only be joining amateur singing contests)."

"Pop Star's" triple platinum sales have established Sarah's stake in the entertainment industry—and in the future.

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MONA LISA SMILE PG13 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	WISHING STAIRS R13 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	CHASING LIBERTY PG13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

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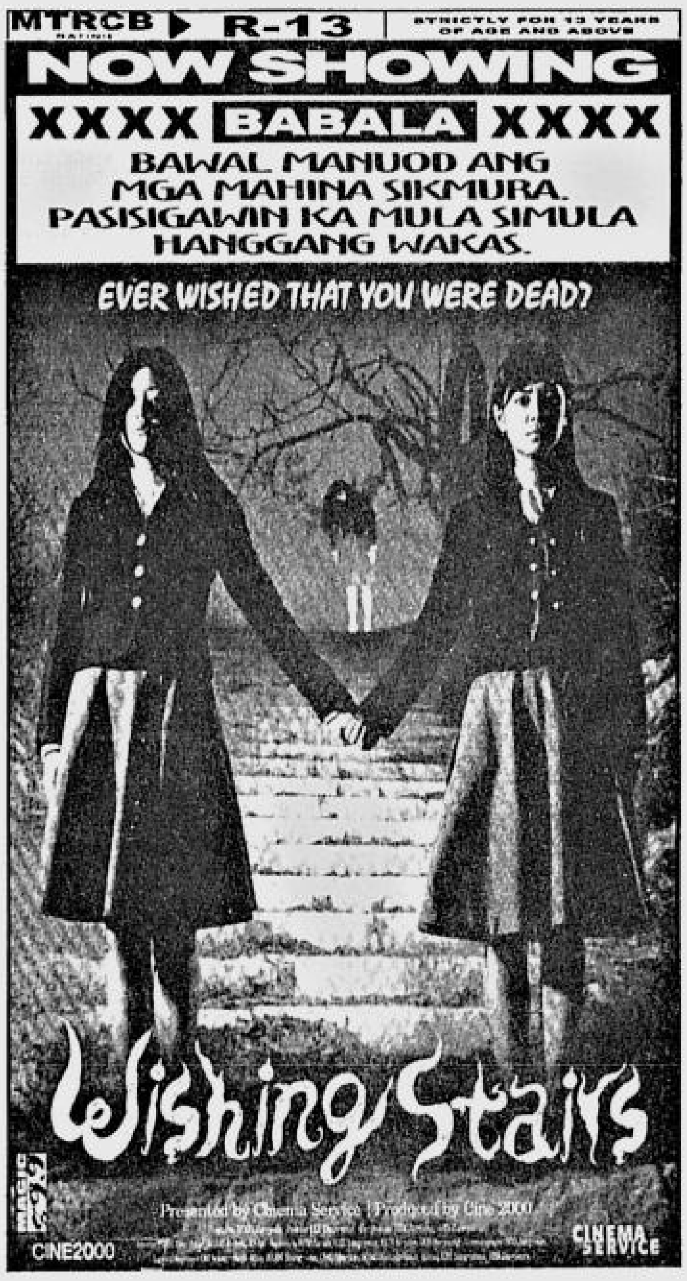
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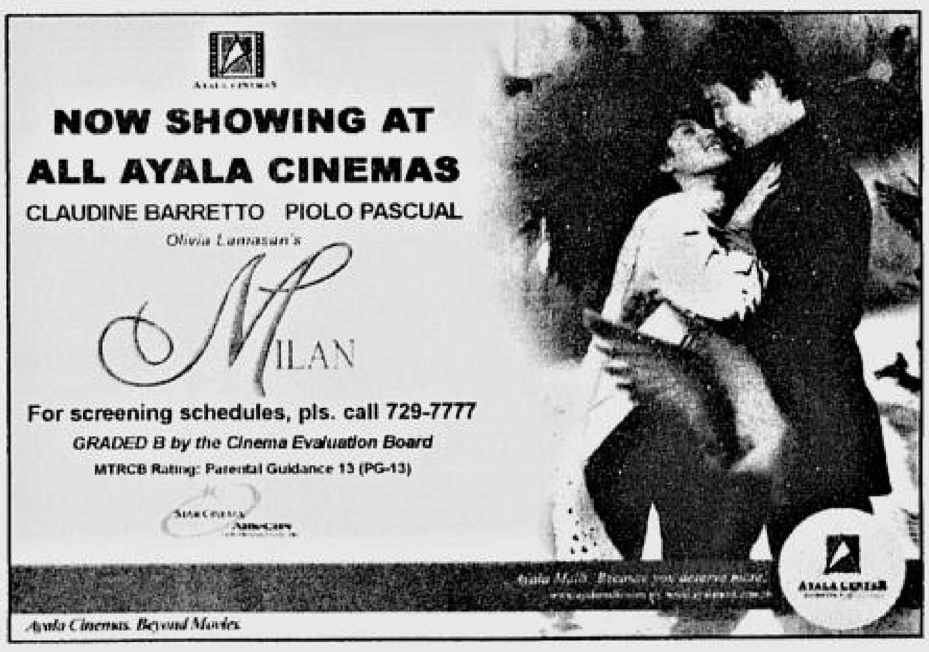
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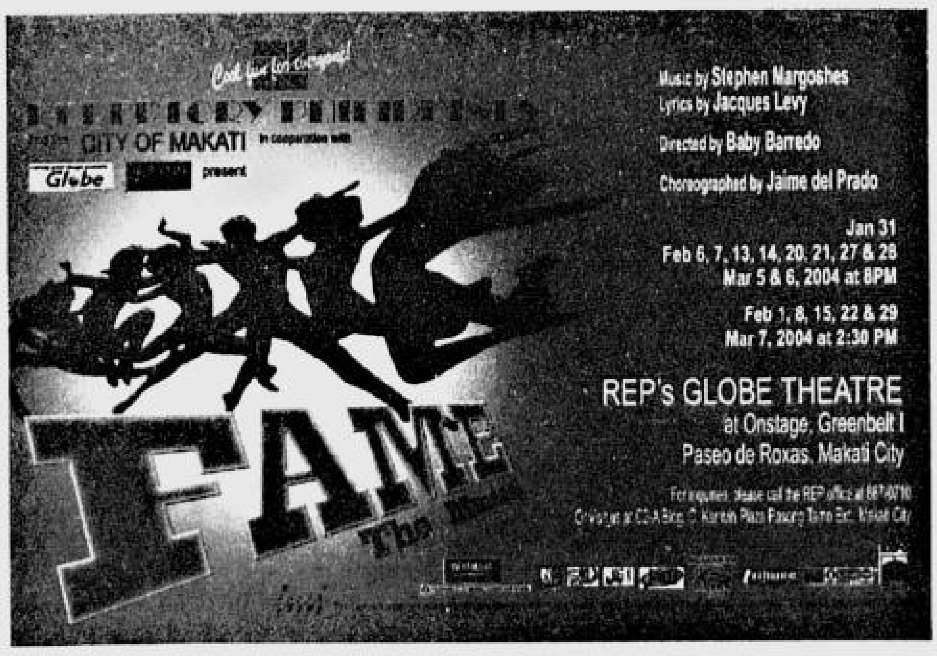
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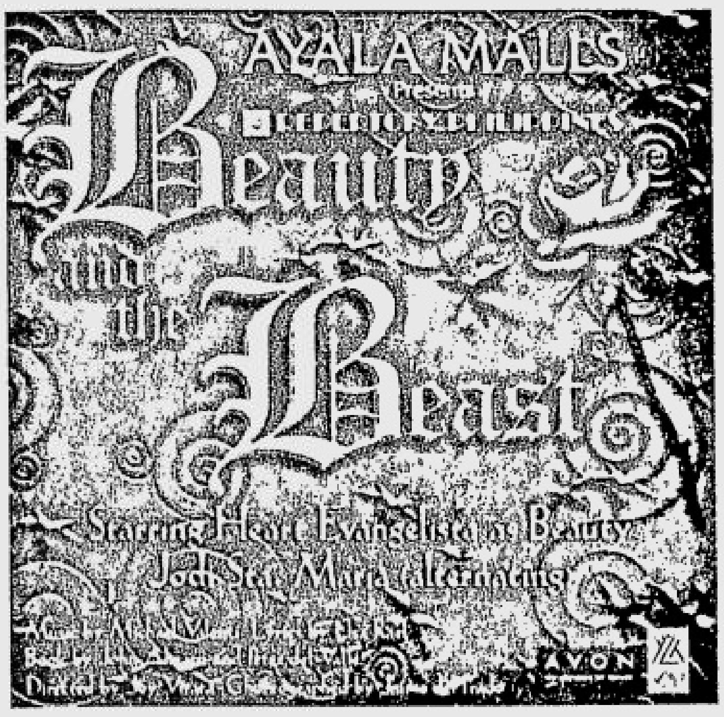
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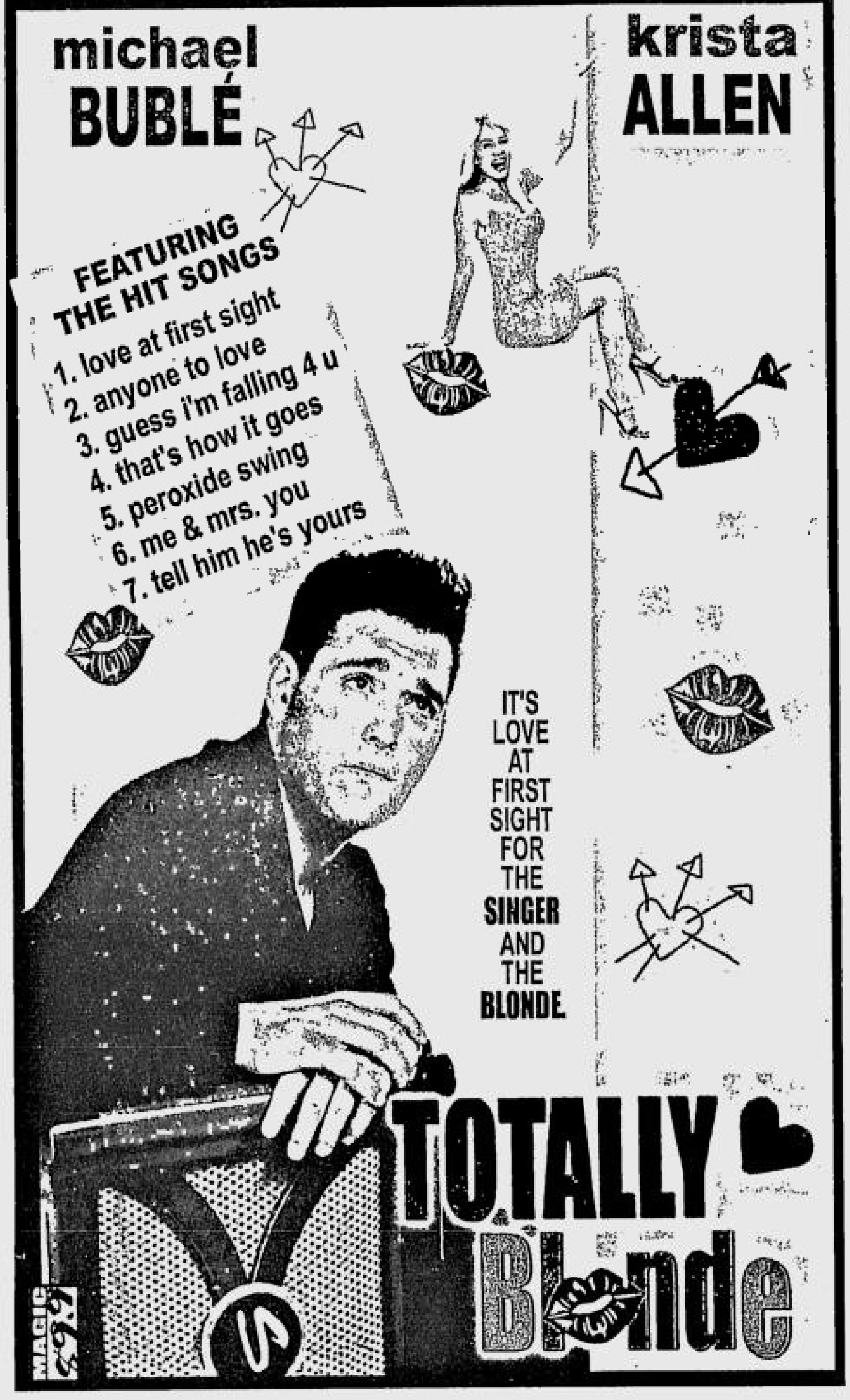
OPENS FEBRUARY 18

A SEX COMEDY THAT BREAKS ALL THE RULES.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krista ALLEN
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2. anyone to love
3. guess i'm falling 4 u
4. that's how it goes
5. peroxide swing
6. me & mrs. you
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julia roberts
mona lisa smile

Julia Roberts dazzles in 'Mona Lisa Smile'

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BEST ACTOR
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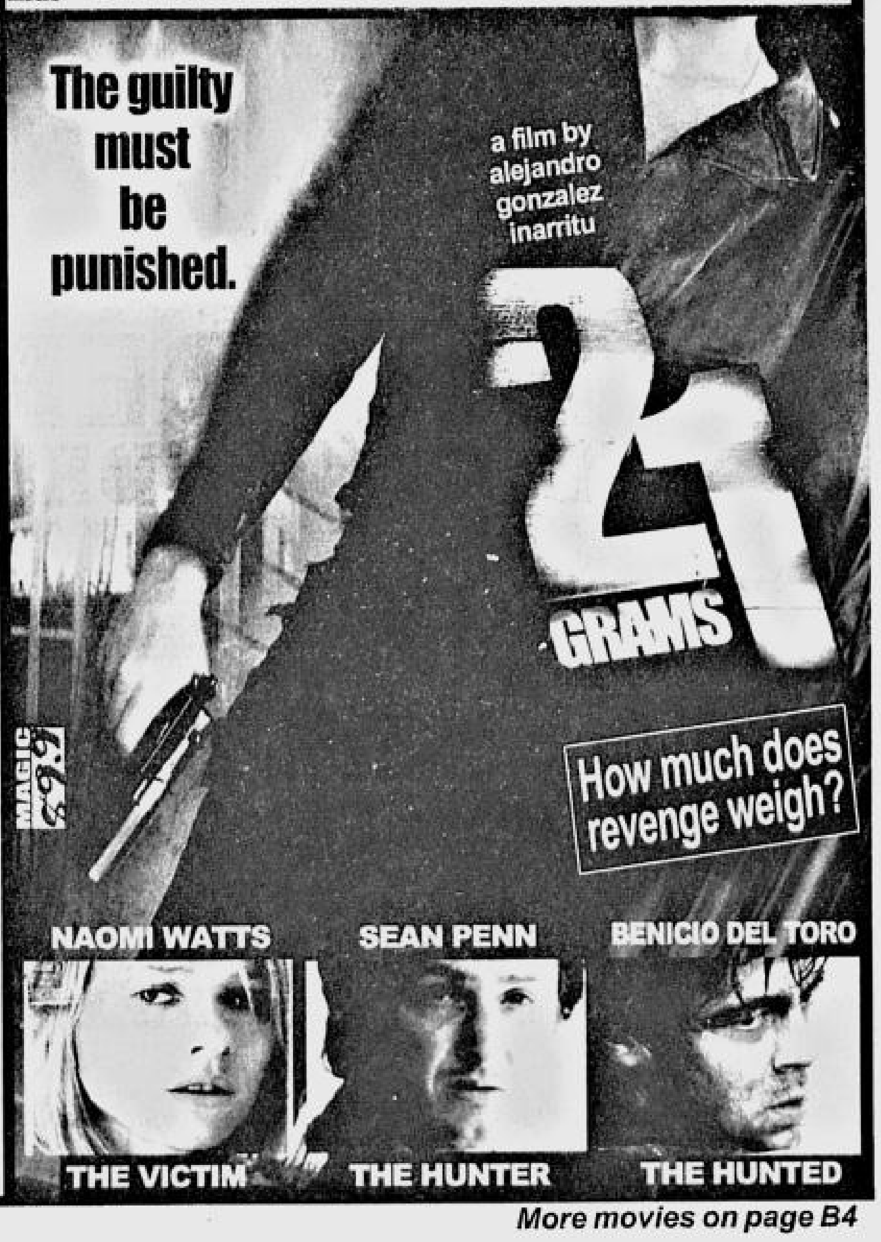
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More movies on page B4

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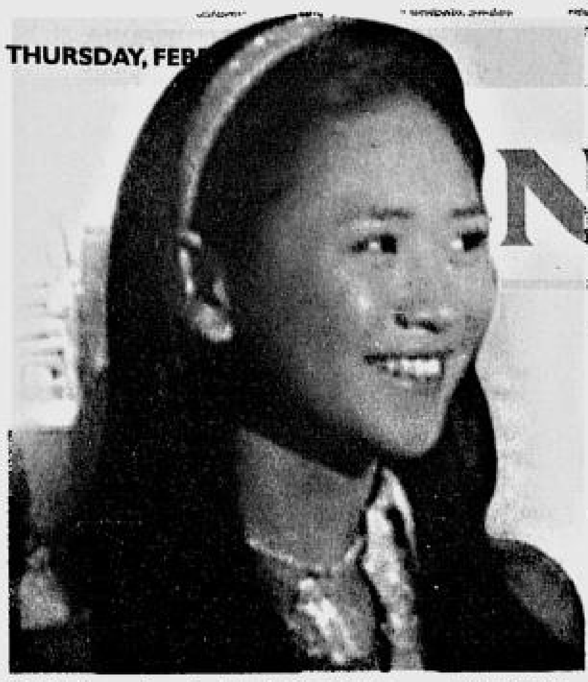


SARA Geronimo: A stake in the future. TERRY HEARSEY

Recording artist loses P2.2 M to record pirates

President Macapagal strengthens anti-piracy law

By Nini Valera
and Juliet Labog-Javellana

IF NOT for piracy, young recording actress Sarah Geronimo would have made P3 million in royalties from sales of her debut album "Pop Star" under Viva Records.

While Sarah's album has already reached the triple platinum mark with 90,000 copies sold, her royalty of P10 per album sold, or five percent of whole sale price, is nowhere near P3 million that had been her projected earning, according to Viva Entertainment's Vic Del Rosario.

"At the rate the album has sold in the legitimate records' market, 'Pop Star' should have sold already half a million copies," he said. "There are in fact more copies of the pirated album than the original."

Long-stemmed white rose

But with the Optical-Media Bill, which President Macapagal-Arroyo signed into law on Tuesday in Los Baños, Laguna where she was feted by entertainment industry stalwarts, including Del Rosario, piracy in all forms—video, audio, software—might finally be licked.

The bill has been touted to have more teeth than its predecessor, a Marcos act that created the Videogram Regulatory Board in 1985. It is for this that the "Artists for President Gloria" expressed their appreciation by giving her long-stemmed white roses during a program at the National Arts Center in Mt. Makiling. About 50 of the 100 Viva contract stars, who the organizers said were supporting the President, were paraded on stage at the NAC multipurpose hall. Among the stars were Giselle Sanchez, Viva Hot Babes, Viva Hot Men, Luke Mijares, Jay Salas, Brad Turvy, Salbakuta, and other young stars like Sarah Geronimo.

Edu appointed

According to Del Rosario, in the three years that Ms Macapagal has been President, audio piracy had been curbed, even if the VRB law does not cover the recording industry. This flaw had been rectified by the President when she appointed actor Bong Revilla as chair of the anti-piracy body.

Edu Manzano, who hosted the program and who was appointed by the President as chair of the Optical-Media Board on Tuesday, said in his power point presentation that the VRB had sold 14 million hologram labels, up by 10 million from year 2000 figures. It is through these hologram labels that the number of legitimate copies of VCDs and DVDs is determined. Bogus products do not have hologram labels.

GLORIA
PRESIDENT

VIVA's Vic Del Rosario TERRY HEARSEY

Del Rosario said it was during President Macapagal-Arroyo's term that the entertainment industry received the most number of incentives, which include tax breaks for movies with A and B ratings by the Films Rating Board. Films rated A enjoy zero percent tax, while B-rated movies pay only a third of the tax.

He told Inquirer Entertainment that Ms Macapagal had also reduced to 15 percent the withholding tax of entertainment industry workers, down by five percent. He added that in 2002 the President had also given P50 million worth of incentives to producers whose films had qualified for that year's Metro Manila film fest.

Firing broadsides

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself noted her contributions to the industry. Contradicting her policy against mudslinging by firing broadsides against ousted President Joseph Estrada, bossom buddy of opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr., Ms Macapagal noted the introduction of host Edu Manzano that "in the entire history of our country and of all the presidents, I am the one who had the most contribution to the showbiz industry."

"Sorry to say this, I did better than the leader who came from show business," she said, without mentioning the name of her detained predecessor, multiawarded actor Joseph Estrada.

Met rehab

Aside from the reduction of the amusement tax and the P50 million support she gave the 2002 Metro Manila Film Festival, the President also cited the rehabilitation of the Metropolitan Theater as among her plans. She also stressed that the fight against piracy had never been better than under her administration, courtesy of Revilla who she predicted would top the senatorial election.

During the same program on Tuesday, Mar Roxas, another senatorial candidate of K4, reminded Ms Macapagal that during her state visit to Washington in 2001, she told US President George W. Bush that once the Optical-Media Bill was signed into law, Filipino actors and artists would have a better opportunity to compete in the American market.

'Small' movie fan

"I did all this because I am very much a movie fan since I was small," the President said. "And since I am still small, I am a movie fan up to now."

She told the crowd that as a young girl growing up with her grandmother in Iligan in the '50s, she often went on "triple dates" in the movies with her grandmother and their family driver Romeo.

"The movies were our only entertainment so all the movies, the Tagalog movies, we watched them," she said.

Back in Manila when her father was still a congressman, her mother often took her to the Times Theater to watch the double movie offerings, the President recounted.

RECORDING/ A23

'No-no's on the TV screen

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SOME viewers are ticked off by certain stars' propensity for complaining and fighting on TV, instead of in private. "Why can't they just solve their problems between themselves?"—that's a question we often hear these days.

Why can't they? Well, as a recent on-camera imbroglio between ex-spouses showed, both parties need the TV exposure to plug new TV projects or political plans.

They need the publicity so badly that they're willing—eager, even—to air their dirty laundry in public just to grab viewers' attention and generate interest in their new career or political moves.

That's how cynical, pragmatic and utilitarian some stars have become—at the expense, not really of themselves, but of the TV audience, which is subjected to sordid details about combative stars' messy lives, details that viewers don't want to know, thank you very much!

But some stars have become so self-obsessed that they think everybody is fascinated with their private lives—the more sordid, the better. Not true! Viewers are protesting that they shouldn't be made receptacles for celebrities' personal trash.

If stars refuse to heed the TV audience's complaints, viewers can always zap them to non-existence with a flick of their TV remotes, from trash to ash in a blink of addled eye. What sweet revenge!

Other no-no's on the TV screen that viewers can also zap out of existence:

- TV talk variety shows who love to talk about themselves. Talk about being self-obsessed (and *kulang sa pansin*), these neo-Narcissuses take the cake.

They have forgotten that program hosts are supposed to focus on their guests, not on themselves. Truth to tell, some hosts have been on TV for so long that their limitations have been exposed to viewers, who have lost interest in them and their personal tics and kicks.

- The perennial pluggers who spend so much time thanking their sponsors, friends and relatives, leaving precious few minutes for real program content.

On a recent show, a host thanked her clothes supplier, make-up artist, hairstylist, dermatologist, "eyewear" supplier, a shoe company, an accessories firm—etc! Practically everything she had on was the product of an "exchange deal," with the possible exception of her underwear and other unmentionables.

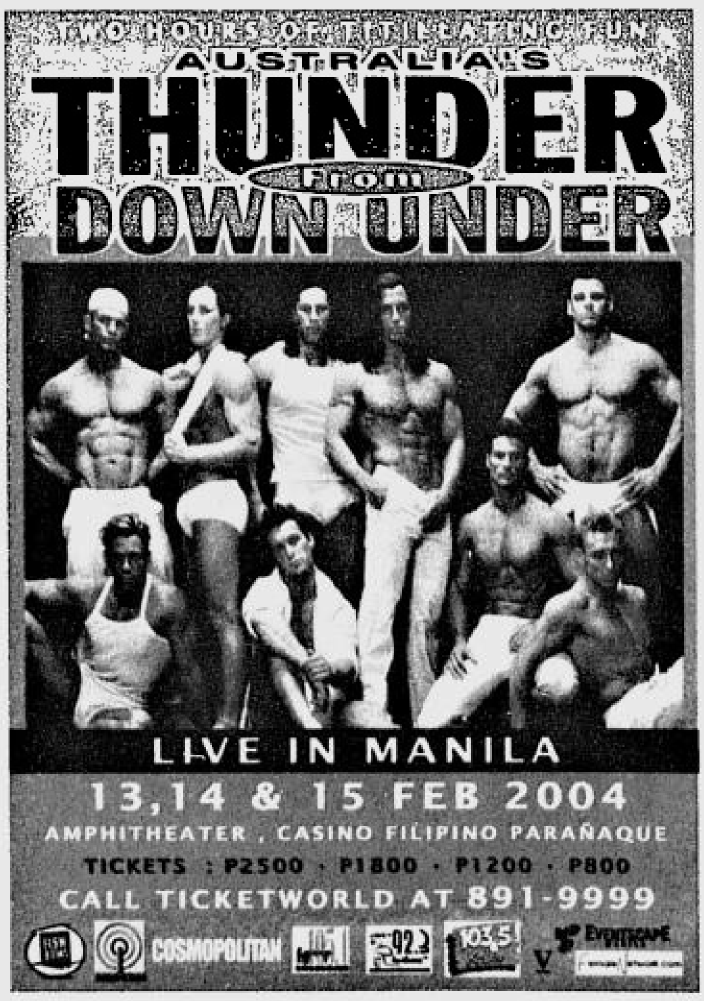
Don't on-cam talents know that this is a turn-off for viewers? That it makes TV stars look stingy and mercenary, and disrespectful of viewers' right to real entertainment as opposed to a litany of self-serving plugs?

Viewers really, really have to be less patient with stars' excesses. TV talents are to serve the TV audience, not the other way around. So, they shouldn't be allowed to waste viewers' time with their personal plugs and flatter-patter.

'The Essential Toto'

TOTO performs at the ALiw Theater at the CCP Complex on Feb. 13 and 14, and at the Freedom Ring Amphitheater at Clark on Feb. 15. Call 891-9999.

Before they arrive, fans can reacquaint themselves with the band by listening to "The Essential Toto," a new release that compiles their hits, including "Rosanna," "I'll Be Over You" and "Africa."



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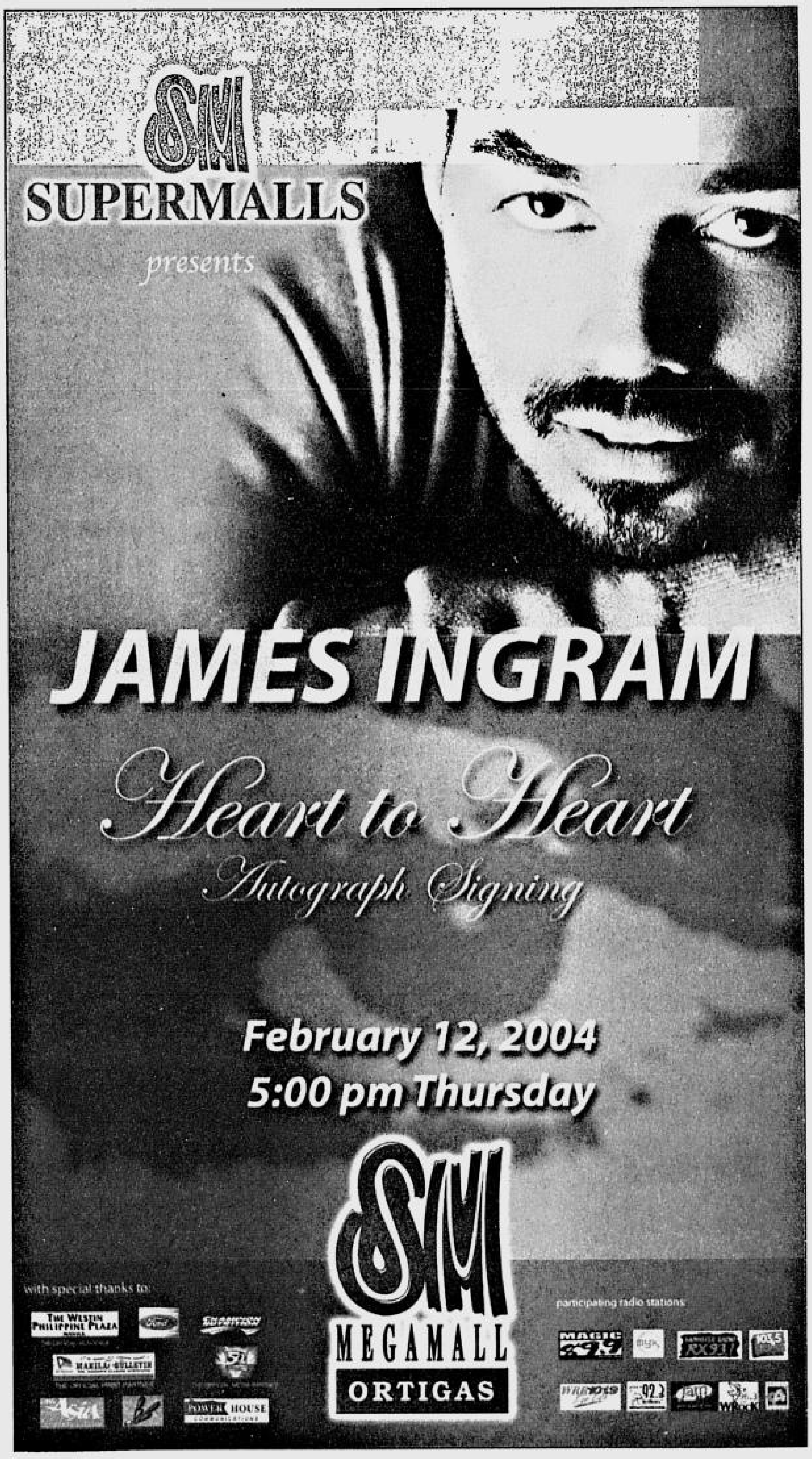

Tours, Leisure & Chow

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897-8808 local 209 and 238

Alden Joshua Cedo, Graphics Design

Mandarin Oriental celebrates love

MANDARIN Oriental, Manila celebrates the wondrous facets and stages of love and romance via four irresistible Valentine room packages available from tomorrow, Feb. 13 to 15, and exquisite choices for that perfect Valentine repast.

Couples will be delighted with packages for an overnight stay combined with treats for two. The packages are all inclusive of American buffet breakfast, with an added meal: Amorous, offered at P4,000++ includes an overnight stay in a Superior or Deluxe room and a romantic three-course set meal for two at Mandarin Deli. Attraction, offered at P5,500++, for a stay in a deluxe room and buffet lunch or dinner at the hotel's chic and trendy Paseo Uno. Fascination, at P9,900++, offers a stay in a premier room, and a six-course set dinner at The Tivoli prepared with the impeccable style and flair of one of the city's acclaimed restaurants.

For the ultimate pampering, Passion at P18,500++ offers more than just a standard stay and breakfast—the overnight stay is in a Club Suite, with which couples get to enjoy Club benefits (access to the luxurious Club lounge for check-in and check-out; complimentary executive breakfast, all-day selection of beverages and snack fare, evening cocktails and hors d'oeuvres; complimentary pressing of one dress or suit; complimentary wireless internet access; services of Club Concierge, to name some); a six-course set dinner at The Tivoli, and massage treatments for couples at the city's most luxurious haven of wellness and relaxation, The Oriental Spa. Should those availing themselves of Attraction and Fascination packages wish to upgrade their accommodations to a Club deluxe room, a supplement of P2,500++ applies, which will entitle them to full Club benefits. The packages are valid for Philippine residents only. For details and reservations, call 750-8888.

Mandarin Oriental's restaurants are also primed for the occasion, with special menus designed by its award-winning chefs. At Paseo Uno, a special Valentines Day lunch and dinner buffet offered at P1,200++ per person features sumptuous treats. From Feb. 13 to 15, surprise a loved one with a romantic dinner at The Tivoli or Tin Hau. At P2,950++ per person, The Tivoli's special six-course Valentine dinner menu offers a choice of three main courses. A long-stemmed rose and a surprise gift are offered to lady diners. Tin Hau's eight-course Valentines set dinner menu is priced at P1,380++/person.

The Captain's Bar also offers a special Valentine's Day dinner buffet featuring oven-roasted leg of lamb on sautéed lentils, Pan-fried barramundi fillet in basil-flavoured clam sauce, and Roast prime rib with bone marrow sauce, among other gastronomic choices at P950++/person. And from 9 p.m. the Kislev band performs, at P350++ minimum consumable per person. A special Valentine's Cocktail is also offered at P280++/person. At the Mandarin Deli, a three-course Valentine's set meal at P680 ++/person and various Valentine confectionery, pralines, and cakes are offered until 15. For reservations and enquiries please call 750-8888.

Where to Stay Where to GO

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

New World Renaissance Hotel
Esperanza St. cor. makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 811-6888/Fax. 811-6777
www.marriott.com

Makati Shangri-La Hotel
Ayala Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 813-8888/ Fax 813-5499
www.shangri-la.com

Dusit Hotel Nikko
Ayala Center, 1223 Makati City Phil.
Tel. 867-3333 Email: dusitmnl@dusit.com
http://manila.dusit.com

Barcelo Hotels and Resorts
27th Floor, Trident Towers, 312 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City 1200
Tel. (02) 889-1000/ fax (02) 889-2765
www.barcelo-asia.com

Mactan Island Resort
Punta Engano Road, Lapu Lapu Cebu
Tel. (632) 231-0288/Fax (632) 231-1688
www.shangri-la.com

Intercontinental Manila
1 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Tel 815-9711
www.intercontinental.com

ASTORIA PLAZA
15 J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Business District, Pasig City 1600
Tel 687-1111 Fax 910-0370
Email: sales@astoriaplaza.com

City Garden Hotel-Makati
Makati Ave., cor. Kalayaan St., Makati City
Tel. (02) 899-1111Fax. (02) 899-1415
Email: makati:citygardenhotels.com

Executive Plaza Hotel
1630 A Mabini St., Malate, Manila
Tel 523-1000 /fax 525-8979

Hotel Veniz
No. 1 Abanao St. Baguio City
Tel. (074) 446-0700/fax (074) 446-0704

Hotel Supreme
113 Magsaysay Ave., Baguio City
Tel. (074) 443-2011 to 18 / Fax. (074) 442-2855

Skyrise Hotel
18 Dominican Road, Baguio City
Tel (074) 445-6834 to 36 /fax (074) 443-3897

The Marco Polo
CM Recto St. Davao City 8000
Tel. (082) 221-0888/fax (082) 225-0111
www.marcopolohotels.com

The Peninsula Manila Hotel
Cor. Ayala Ave. & Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 810-3456/ Fax 815-4825

Mandarin Oriental Manila
Paseo de Roxas cor. Makati Ave. Makati City
Tel. 750-8888
www.mandarinoriental.com

The Bellevue Manila
North Bridgeway, Northgate
Alabang, Muntinlupa
Tel. (632) 771-8181/ fax (632) 771-8282
www.thebellevue.com.ph

Waterfront Hotel Lahug
1 Salinas Drive, Lahug Cebu City
Tel. (6332) 232-6888/Fax (6332)232-6880
www.waterfronthotels.net

Waterfront Hotel Mactan
1 Airport Road, Lapu Lapu City, 6015
Tel. (6332) 340-4888/fax (6332) 340-5693
www.waterfronthotels.net

Royal Mandaya Hotel
J. Palma Gil St. Davao City
Tel. (082) 225-8888/fax (082) 225-1888

Camp John Hay Manor
Loakan Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 446-0231 to 50

City Travel Hotel
15 Kisad Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 445-0456 / Fax (074) 445-0457

Cooyeesan Hotel Plaza
Naguilian cor. Asin Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 447-8888 to 93/ (074) 447-0895 to 98
Fax. (074) 447-0494

Golden Pine Hotel and Restaurant
Intersection of Carino St. and Legarda Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074)444-9965 to 72/740-8975/
Fax. (074) 446-0704

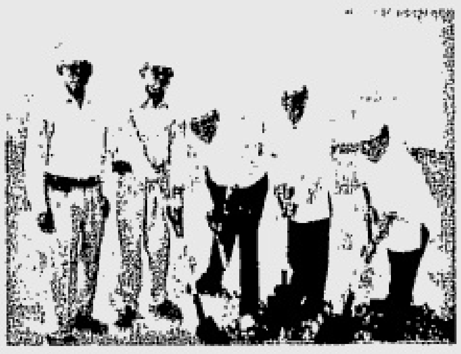
Taal Vista Hotel
Aguinaldo Highway, Tagaytay City
Tel. (046) 413-1000/Fax. (046) 413-1225

Grand Regal Hotel Davao
J. P. Laurel St., Lanang, Davao City
Tel (382) 235-0888 / (382) 234-3858

SUPER FUN FEBRUARY AT FIESTA SAN MIGUEL

Super fun parties every night this lovely month of February at Dusit Hotel Nikko's Fiesta San Miguel. On Mondays is Joan and Route '70. Swing on Tuesdays with NichE and Mocha & Spin Art, and on Wednesdays with Carmela Cuneta and Acoustic Jive. Ecoustic Soul goes back-to-back with Great Divide on Thursdays, Stagecrew with George every Friday, and 3rd Degree with Retrospect on Saturdays. Fiesta San Miguel is the first and only hotel bar and restaurant offering freshly brewed San Miguel Beer along with an array of Filipino dishes. For queries, call 867-3333 ext. 3308

The Bellevue Hotel constructs new annex


SHOWN are Abe Villacorta of RPJ Development, Johnny Chan, Manuel Sy of New Golden City Builders, architects Esteban Tan and Arlen de Guzman.

THE BELLEVUE hotel starts construction on a 1,500 square-meter annex to respond to Alabang's growing need for fine, spacious venues. Expected by yearend are a ground floor pre-function area and the whole second floor as a grand function hall that can fit 1,200 people in a cocktail setting.

"We have decided to construct a sizeable ballroom so that our guests and friends no longer have to go to Makati or other places for their big parties and company gatherings. This has been our goal from the start - to be the best in terms of convenience, service and value to our clients," The Bellevue general manager Cyndy Tan-Jarabata emphasizes.

The two-storey annex hopes to be the region's trendsetter in design, equipment and services. State-of-the-art audio-video, videoconferencing, and wireless equipment will be made available for corporate events, trade shows, weddings and debuts.

A ROMANTIC EVENING AT EXECUTIVE PLAZA HOTEL

Spend a romantic evening with those you love at Executive Plaza Hotel at 1630 A. Mabini St., Malate, Manila. Avail of a double or twin occupancy with a set dinner for two for only P1,800net. Valid for the whole month of February only. For inquiries and reservations, please call 523-1000 or 525-8969, fax 525-8979, email e-mail sales@executiveplazahotel.com or visit www.executiveplazahotel.com.

Romance awaits at Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort

STAY in love when you stay at Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort.

For only $125 net, go on a romantic getaway with an overnight stay in a superior Bayview room with breakfast for two, airport shuttle transfers, a complimentary bottle of sparkling wine and 20 percent discount on spa services for two. Book for two nights and avail yourself of early check-in at 10 a.m. and late check-out at 3 p.m., valid from Feb. 12 to 16 only.

Enjoy lovely romantic meals with special promos. Enjoy a semi-buffet of delectable Italian dishes at Paparazzi. For lovers craving Asian flavor, the Asiatica is the place to be. Feast on an array of hearty international dishes at the Garden Patio. For an intimate evening, dine under a canopy of stars, amidst lulling waves at the resort's most romantic Cowrie Cove. Savor the island's sumptuous seafood specialties including lobster, prawns, and the ultimate aphrodisiac—oysters. Or, better yet, fall in love again at an exclusive candlelit dinner at some of the resort's most romantic hideaways. Sweep your date completely off her feet on your own private island or beach cabana with your own butler and a special set menu for the occasion. Bookings must be in advance for the limited spots. Rustans' Essences gift items also await ladies on this red letter day.

Call Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort at (032) 231-0288. For Paradise Island and Cabana dinner bookings, call the events department at (032) 231-8264.

People, Events & Products

Children's Hour's Valentine treat for children

Alay sa Puso
children's hour

YOU can have as many Valentine's as you wish, and more, through "Alay sa Puso"-a Valentine's campaign of Children's Hour in cooperation with various restaurants and establishments and supported by the Philippine Daily Inquirer. These establishments pledge not just the most romantic services this weekend, but the most meaningful as well. By patronizing participating establishments like the Ayala Commercial Centers in Alabang and Makati (including Ayala Center cinemas in Greenbelt, Glorietta and Alabang Town Center), Robinson's Commercial Centers, and establishments in Eastwood, Shangri-La, Rockwell and Malate, you will have an opportunity to help our children.

Participating restaurants are: In Glorietta and Makati-Sari-Sari Cafe, Subway, Figaro, Kwangtong, Mangan and Oakwood Premier Ayala Center; In Greenbelt-Ebun, Figaro, Bizu Patisserie, Max Brenner, Cafe Havana, and Una Mas Mingoy's; In Poweplant Mall, Rockwell-Dish,, Kulinarya Kitchen, The Blue Kitchen, Pazzo, and Cucina Victoria: In Robinson's Galleria-Thai Kitchen and Bacolod Chicken Inasal; In Malate-Africana, Bistro Remedios, Cafe Adriatico, Cafe Havana, In The Mood and Mil Novecientos. Also participating are The Blue Kitchen (Shangri-La), Dunkin' Donuts (Robinson's Manila), Afrodisia Grill (Greenhills, San Juan), Sari-Sari Cafe (Eastwood), San Mig (Alabang Town Center), and all branches of Cibo.

The candles fizzle, the roses bloom, and your menu await. Make your Valentine's more meaningful by celebrating it for the kids of Children's Hour. Your pledge and commitment would be the most delectable treat on their menu.

Children's Hour is a fundraising campaign that calls on individuals and companies to donate an hour of their earnings in support of organizations with programs for the welfare and development of children. Children's Hour may be contacted at 894-1663, emailed at ask@childrenshour.org.ph, or visit www.childrenshour.org.ph.

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RP fails CalPERS' scoring system anew

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINES has received a failing mark for the third straight year from Wilshire Consulting that could lead to its removal from the list of permissible investment sites of the United States' biggest pension fund, the California Employees' Retirement System or CalPERS.

In a report submitted by Wilshire to CalPERS covering 27 countries, the consulting firm gave the Philippines a total score of 1.86, which was an improvement from 1.46 in 2003. But the qualified investment sites for the US pension fund must score at least 2.

The CalPERS board will meet on Feb.17 to discuss the recommendations of Wilshire.

Government officials have assailed the scoring system of Wilshire. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said Wilshire Associates had stubbornly refused to correct the inaccuracies in its scoring system for the Philippines.

Wilshire bases its scoring on third-party sources. Half of the score is based on market factors such as transparency, regulation and investor protection while the other half considers country factors like political stability, judiciary, labor and civil liberties.

Corazon Guidote, executive director of the country's Investor Relations Office, noted that had Wilshire agreed to correct the grading system, the Philippines would have had a higher score. She said Philippine officials did all they could but it was tough to work with a counter-party that refused to listen.

Even the country's failure to get out of the money laundering watchlist of the Financial Action Task Force was brought up by Wilshire. The consulting firm also questioned why the Philippines has not signed the labor convention on forced labor when Guidote pointed out that it was already in the Constitution.

"The Philippines, which had been on the list, was extended the one-year cure period last year because its score had dropped below 2. In the 2004 report, the Philippines' score rose significantly above Wilshire's past threshold of 1.5 but not enough to meet the 2 threshold," Wilshire said in a report to CalPERS.

Since 2002, CalPERS, upon the recommendation of Wilshire, had stricken the Philippines off its list of permissible investment sites but the government had managed to convince the influential pension fund to defer any action.

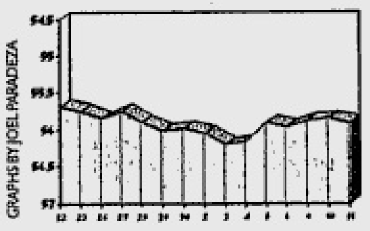
Last year, CalPERS gave the country a one-year cure period to address the deficiencies and work out its differences with Wilshire. The country's de-listing from CalPERS could affect the stock market.

While the influential US pension fund had placed only about $30 million in local stocks, its investment decision signals others to do the same. CalPERS' manages about $133 billion in assets, of which $1.8 billion are in

RP/B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



JANUARY FEBRUARY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 55.905 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 11, 2004

¥ 105.40 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 10, 2004

GOLD: $405.40-405.90

per ounce Hong Kong, Feb. 11, 2004

INTEREST RATES

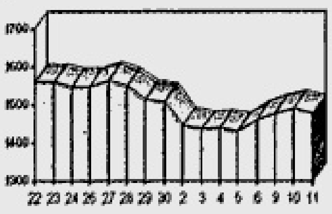
February 11, 2004-MART1 Rates Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 11-Feb-04	MART1 10-Feb-04
1 Month	6.7446	6.7446
3 Months	6.8196	6.8214
6 Months	8.0929	8.0946
1 Year	8.9661	8.9232
2 Years	9.7304	9.6883
3 Years	10.5786	10.5483
4 Years	10.8679	10.8533
5 Years	11.2214	11.2333
7 Years	11.5446	11.515
10 Years	11.8286	11.8033
20 Years	12.1661	12.1517
25 Years	12.4554	12.4483

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

JANUARY FEBRUARY



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks fall on profit-taking

STOCKS, led by phone firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), took a breather yesterday with profit-taking setting in after three straight sessions of gains.

Shares of Ayala Corp, the country's largest conglomerate, closed unchanged at P5.90 despite news it had posted a bigger-than-expected fourth-quarter profit.

It said it made a net income of P903 million in the fourth quarter, beating market expectations of P270 million to P631 million.

"This is just profit-taking. I expect bargain hunters to emerge again when the main index hits 1,450 points," Astro del Castillo, managing director of brokerage firm First Grade Holdings, said.

The 33-share main index ended 13.17 points or 0.88 percent lower at 1,477.04 points yesterday. It is still up 2.4 percent so far this year. *Reuters*

GSIS, 4 others buy PSE shares

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange (PSE) yesterday accepted the subscription of five institutional investors for 5.265 million new shares of its capital stock.

The new investors, the Government Service Insurance System, the PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund, the San Miguel Corp. Retirement Fund, Kim Eng Investment Ltd. and KE Strategic Pte Ltd., paid a total of P629 million for their investment in the private placement that was underwritten by ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners Inc.

The proceeds of the share issue will be used to develop the exchange's infrastructure to support business efficiency, fortify its working capital, and address other concerns that benefit the shareholders.

A substantial portion of PSE shares going to independent hands will be a major leap

GSIS/B2

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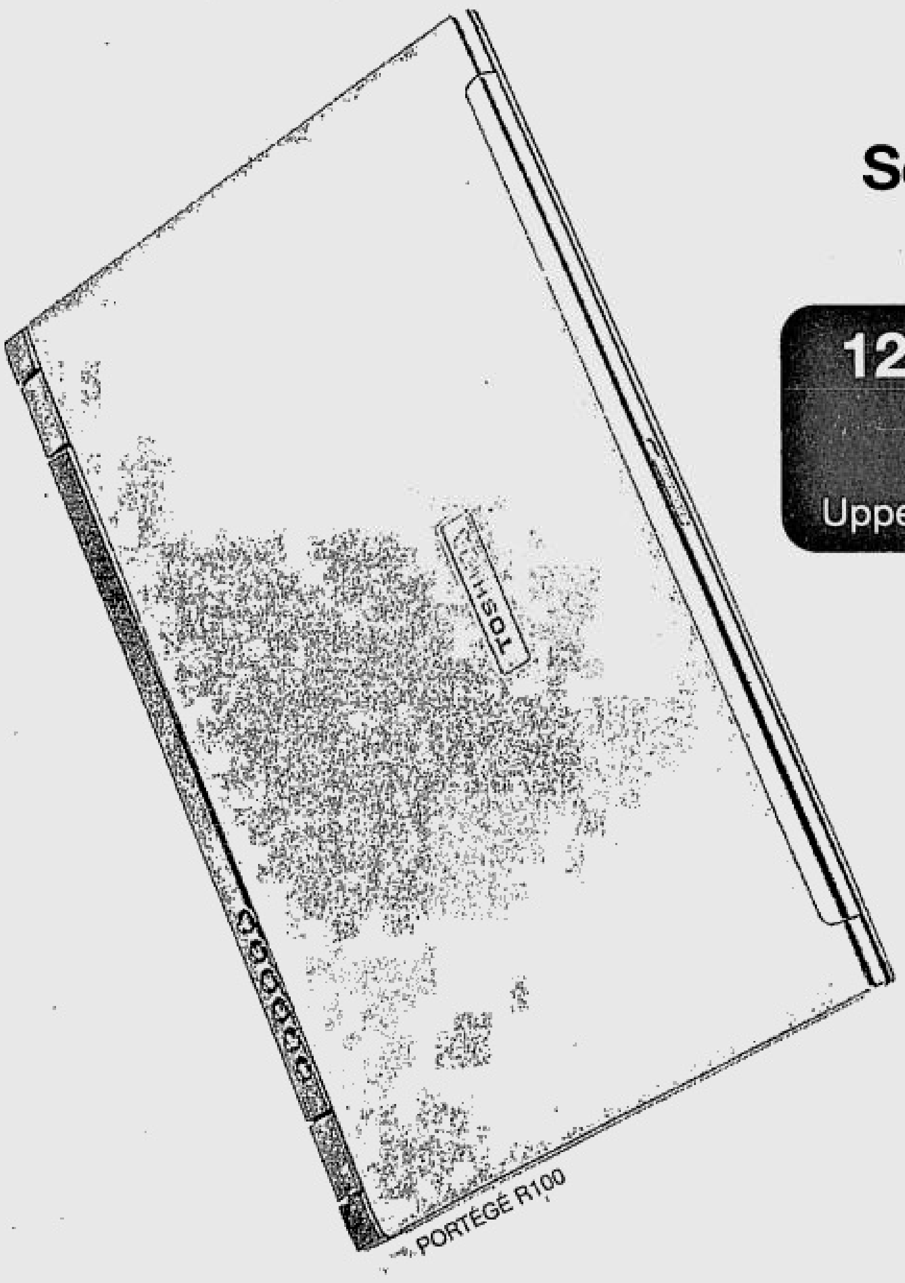

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*Satellite A10-S102

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 11, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	17,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46	46	45	45.5	314,600
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	38.5	39	38.5	39	12,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.57	0.62	0.57	0.6	4,780,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27	27	26	26.5	93,300
Philippine National Bank	24	24	23.75	23.75	3,400
Phil. Savings Bank	26	26.5	26	26.5	5,400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	500
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	5,100
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	130,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2000	2005	2000	2005	220
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1520	1520	1520	1520	2,500
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23.5	23.5	23.25	23.5	15,200
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	680,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	905	905	890	890	8,860
Ipeople Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	13,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.038	0.039	0.035	0.039	4,700,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.24	1.3	7,330,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	945	960	935	935	69,130
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19.75	19.75	19.25	19.5	123,500
Manila Electric Co. B	32	32	31	31	346,400
Petron Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.15	3.2	4,644,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	2,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	213,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	2,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	2,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	3,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.08	1.12	1.06	1.12	769,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31	31	31	100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	992,400
Swift Food Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	55.5	55.5	55	55.5	114,900
San Miguel Corp. B	69	69.5	69	69	115,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,500,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	120,000
Ayala Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	1,186,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	44,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	50,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	27,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.61	0.59	0.59	3,980,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	500,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	2,300,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	110,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	23.75	23.75	23.25	23.25	396,500
Ionics Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.4	1.4	170,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.86	1.88	1.86	1.86	263,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.04	1.06	3,560,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	970,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.16	1.1	1.16	49,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	100,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	650,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.5	79,500
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3	3	3	3	1,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	12	12	12	12	600
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1.28	1	1.28	1,220,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	150,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	30,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	30,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	23.5	23.5	23.25	23.25	531,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series I	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,800
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8	3,142,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	1,060,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.215	820,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	1,821,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
City & Land Developers	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	3,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	150,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.08	2.12	2.04	2.12	82,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	3,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	1,764,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.22	920,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	2,310,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	5,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.007	28,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	230,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	30,020,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	4,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	10,000

GSIS, 4 others . . .

From page B1

toward achieving full demutualization and bringing the PSE at par with the other demutualized and listed exchanges in the region such as the Australian, Hong Kong and Singapore stock exchanges and even ahead of other exchanges in Southeast Asia.

The move came after the Securities and Exchange Commission called the attention of the exchange that only 0.75 percent of the PSE shares have been traded a month since its listing. The Commission directed the exchange "to take the necessary steps" to immediately observe the limitations set in the SRC restricting any industry from owning more than 20 percent of the exchange's outstanding capital stock.

DISCLOSURES

ABOITIZ Equity Ventures Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 17, 4 p.m. at the Ballroom of CebuCity Marriott Hotel. Stockholders of record as of March 31 will be entitled to vote at the meeting. Also, a cash dividend of P0.10 per share was declared in favor of stockholders of record as of Feb. 23 and will be payable on March 10.

* * *

CASHROUNDS Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 15 to June 17.

* * *

GRAND Plaza Hotel Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 30.

* * *

SOUTHEAST Asia Cement Holdings Inc. disclosed that it paid a fine of P75,000 to the Securities and Exchange Commission after being delayed in its filing of reply to SEC's comments on the company's first quarter 2003 report.

* * *

PANCAKE House Inc. entered into a joint venture agreement with Happy Frens Inc. to set up Happy Partners Inc. that will own and operate a Pancake House restaurant franchise.

* * *

CEBU Property Ventures and Development Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 23, 3 p.m. at the Sinulog Ballroom of City Sports Club Cebu. Stockholders of record as of Feb. 24 will be entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Bank of Communications will increase the number of its directors from 12 to 15.

* * *

THE CHANGE in the corporate name of Lodestar Mining Corp. to Lodestar Investment Holdings Corp. as well the change in its industry classification and stock symbol would be reflected in the Philippine Stock Exchange's computer system today, Feb. 12. ***Compiled by Maricar D.Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

February 11, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.787526	1.000000	55.872000
Japan	Yen	0.007466	0.009480	0.529700
United Kingdom	Pound	1.473775	1.871400	104.558900
Hongkong	Dollar	0.101384	0.128737	7.192800
Switzerland	Franc	0.637259	0.809192	45.211200
Canada	Dollar	0.591947	0.751654	41.996400
Singapore	Dollar	0.470024	0.596837	33.346500
Australia	Dollar	0.615302	0.781311	43.653400
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.088983	2.652590	148.205500
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.210002	0.266660	14.898800
Brunei	Dollar	0.468626	0.595061	33.247200
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000094	0.000119	0.006600
Thailand	Baht	0.020235	0.025694	1.435600
UAE	Dirham	0.214415	0.272264	15.211900
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.269800	70.946300
Argentina	Peso	0.269239	0.341880	19.101500
Brazil	Real	0.270117	0.342994	19.163800
Denmark	Kroner	0.134220	0.170433	9.522400
India	Rupee	0.017415	0.022114	1.235600
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.207271	0.263193	14.705100
Mexico	New Peso	0.070872	0.089993	5.028100
New Zealand	Dollar	0.550410	0.698910	39.049500
Norway	Kroner	0.113545	0.144179	8.055600
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013963	0.017730	0.990600
South Africa	Rand	0.115641	0.146841	8.204300
Korea	Won	0.000678	0.000861	0.048100
Sweden	Kroner	0.109809	0.139435	7.790500
Syria	Pound	0.015291	0.019417	1.084900
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023764	0.030175	1.685900
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000411	0.000522	0.029200

RP fails CalPERS' scoring system anew

From page B1

emerging markets.

At 2 or above, the only countries that would make it to the CalPERS list were Brazil, Chile, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, Jordan, Malaysia, Mexico, Poland, South Africa, South Korea and Taiwan.

Guidote said that had CalPERS corrected the inaccuracies, the Philippines would score at least 2.05. If the reforms were considered, the score may improve further to 2.22 points and if the grading system was evenly distributed, the rating of the Philippines could even reach 2.63 points.

"The bias of Wilshire is just too strong. We have tried to hard to convince them that they rated us based on certain incorrect information they they fail to recognize," she noted.

Steel

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

AT LAST, control of the bankrupt National Steel Corp., which closed its plant in Iligan in Mindanao four years ago, goes to a new group which is serious—very serious.

The group is Global Infrastructure Holdings Ltd. (GIHL), one of the biggest conglomerates in India.

Its plan shows that it wants to turn National Steel into a fully integrated steel plant after only three years. That serious!

Look, in all of the past three years, our housing authorities could not even set up a working shelter program in a country where five million families need decent dwellings.

* * *

IN the same number of years, that Indian company GIHL can bring to us that dreamed-of integrated steel industry, a must-have for countries wanting to industrialize.

What do you say—let's just invite the Indians, or any other nationality, for that matter, to do our housing program, too? Just kidding, Mike!

Anyway, we can look forward to an integrated steel industry in this country, a plan which we actually made, not just four, but some FORTY years ago.

As we all know, no country can ever hope to industrialize without a real steel industry, not even one where presidential candidates claim to talk directly to God.

* * *

NOW I don't know if it's something in the Macapagal blood, but something nice about the longed-for integrated steel plant happens under a Macapagal administration.

Forty years ago, as I said, then President Diosdado Macapagal approved the semi-integrated steel plant in Iligan, known as the Iligan Integrated Steel Mills.

Deep in debts, and unable to repay them, the company gave up, and its steel project went to the government to become the National Steel plant.

Four years ago, thanks to smuggling, the plant closed down. This time it's Gloriaetta, the daughter of the late Kong Dadong, who reopened the steel mill.

* * *

SAY what you will about some descendants of some past presidents, but the *pogi* points, "cute" points, go to them for the hoped-for integrated steel plant.

Gloriaetta played a key role in the resurrection of the dead National Steel. She initiated talks with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad about it.

Doing the groundwork for Gloriaetta was then Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II, who is the grandson of former President Manuel Roxas.

It is said that Mar himself spent hours and hours talking to the various groups with interests in National Steel. Maybe that's why he is still … well, NOT married.

* * *

GLORIAETTA and Mr. Palengke, with the help of Mahathir, were able to convince the Malaysian stockholders in National Steel to let another group take over the plant.

The new operator, willing to put more equity into National Steel for its reopening, also wanted to lighten the company's debt load.

That means the creditors of National Steel must convert their loans into equity. Thus the Malaysian owners had to be diluted. Impossible, they said! Que horror!

That's when this cute administration of Gloriaetta applied a little diplomacy with Mahathir. See, it was not that impossible!

* * *

AFTER the creditors, er, "cooperated" with this cute administration, they conducted the bidding which the India-based GIHL won. Who the…

Well, GIHL has a steel manufacturing arm called Ispat Industries, which will oversee the National Steel operation. For the sake of certain senators and senatorial candidates, Ispat is only a world leader in a certain steel making technology.

From what I heard, it was the patriarch of the Ispat Group, its founding chair Mohan Lai Mittal, who was deadset on getting the National Steel plant. At last!

* * *

ABOUT 10 years ago in 1994, the same group already tried, but failed, to acquire National Steel from the Ramos administration.

The Ispat Group lost in that bidding. The winner was a consortium of local and Malaysian companies, only to give up later and sell out to another group.

That second-pass group, in turn, also gave up, and it just went on to close down the country's biggest steel plant, buried under P16 billion in debts.

And so the let-me-try-again Ispat Group must be dead serious in its plans for National Steel. It's like love the second time around.

* * *

LET me just rattle off a few facts here. Aside from putting up some $60 million in working capital to reopen National Steel, the Ispat Group is investing $15 million this year on National Steel, and another $10 million next year. I thought that is serious enough, indeed. And what's for us? Well, by the time the group is done with its plans, we will have some 5,000 new jobs. The steel plant will add some P4 billion a year in the GDP. It will pay something like P130 million a year in property taxes to Iligan City, plus about P27 million in other local taxes. The city will become rich. What about if we also put up some housing there?

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE, INC.
The Philippine Stock Exchange Centre, Exchange Road
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

NOTICE

The public is hereby notified that **ALL ASIA SECURITIES MANAGEMENT CORPORATION**, a broker firm with registered address at 6/F SSHG Center, 105 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, voluntarily suspended its trading operations on June 28, 2001. It is in the process of transferring money and security balances of its trading clients to its successor-brokers.

To facilitate the transfer and clear the trading accountabilities of All Asia Sec. Mgt. Corp., all clients having any trade-related claims therewith are hereby requested to file their written claims and/or update their records/signature cards on any day before 27 February 2004, after which date, no claim shall be further entertained. Clients may get in touch with or secure the necessary claim forms, account opening forms and/or signature cards, during business hours at the addresses and contact numbers indicated below:

All Asia Securities Management Corporation
Attention: Ms. Myra Agnes S. Abdon
6/F SSHG Center,
105 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
Tel No. (632) 813-0188 or 818-3211
Fax No. (632) 848-2077

Or

The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc.
Attention: The Compliance and Surveillance Group
(Code: RSL 2000-051601)
The Philippine Stock Exchange Centre
Exchange Road, Ortigas Centre
1605 Pasig City, Metro Manila
Fax No. (632) 637-8811

For Guidance.

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE, INC.
The Philippine Stock Exchange Centre, Exchange Road
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

NOTICE

The public is hereby notified that **WISE SECURITIES PHILIPPINES, INC., (formerly DHARMALA SECURITIES PHILIPPINES, INC.)**, a broker firm with registered address at 12/F L.V. Locsin Bldg., 6752 Ayala Avenue corner Makati Avenue, Makati City, voluntarily suspended its trading operations on October 15, 2003. The company is in the process of transferring money and security balances of its trading clients to its successor-broker.

All clients having any holdings in Wise Securities (formerly Dharmala Securities) are hereby requested to update clients records, such as account opening forms, signature cards, etc. to facilitate transfer of accounts to the designated successor broker, Belson Securities, Inc., **on or before 27 February 2004.** Clients may contact:

Wise Securities Philippines Inc.
Attention: Ms. Myla P. Ferrer
12/F L.V. Locsin Bldg., 6752 Ayala Avenue
corner Makati Avenue, Makati City
Contact No. 812-7602
Fax. No. 817-0544

or

The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc.
Attention: The Compliance and Surveillance Group
(Code: ASD 2000-071601)
The Philippine Stock Exchange Centre
Exchange Road, Ortigas Center
1605 Pasig City, Metro Manila
Fax No. (632) 637-8811

For Guidance.

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE, INC.
The Philippine Stock Exchange Centre, Exchange Road
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

NOTICE

The public is hereby notified that **KERRY SECURITIES**, a broker firm with last registered address at Unit 604A L/G Shangri-la Plaza Mall EDSA cor. Shaw Blvd. Mandaluyong City, voluntarily ceased trading operations on 19 April 1999. The security positions of its trading clients were transferred to **ASIAN CAPITAL EQUITIES, INC.**, as its successor. Asian Capital, a broker firm with registered address at 25-B Rufino Tower Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, is currently in the process of liquidating all its trade-related assets pursuant to the Take-over Order issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission to the Philippine Stock Exchange on November 27, 2003.

All clients having any securities claims with **KERRY SECURITIES** that were transferred to Asian Capital Equities, Inc. are hereby requested to update their records or claim the securities registered in their names. Clients may contact:

The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc.
Attention: The Compliance and Surveillance Group
(Code: RSL 2000-051601)
The Philippine Stock Exchange Centre
Exchange Road, Ortigas Center
1605 Pasig City, Metro Manila
Fax No. (632) 637-8811

Clients are given until **before 27 February 2004** to update records and/or file their security claims, after which date no claim shall be entertained.

For Guidance.

Sales of cars, commercial vehicles down 5%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE AUTOMOTIVE industry headed for a slow start, with vehicle sales declining by 5 percent in January due to the depreciation of the peso and increases in production cost.

According to a joint report of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi) and the Truck Manufacturers Association, vehicle sales last month stood at only 6,518 units, or lower than the 6,880 recorded in the same period last year.

The decline was brought about mainly by the drop in the sales of commercial vehicles, which represent 63 percent of the vehicle market. Campi said that from 5,045 in January 2003, sales of commercial vehicles dropped to 4,090 last month.

Commercial vehicles include light commercial vehicles, light trucks, and trucks and buses.

"January is usually a low month because the market was still recovering from significant expenses made in the previous holiday season," said Campi in the report.

Under the commercial vehicle segment, sales of light commercial vehicles grew 22.5 percent last month to 2,085 units from 1,702 during the same period last year. LCVs include Compact sports utility vehicles (SUVs), full SUVs, DC cab compact pick-ups, and vans.

The trucks and buses group likewise posted growth for the month. From 43 units sold in January last year, sales of this group rose 18.6 percent to 51 units last month.

Sales of light trucks, however, declined 45.3 percent to 141 units from 258 units in January last year.

While sales of commercial vehicles declined, passenger car sales rose 32 percent. From 1,835 units sold in January 2003, the industry sold 2,428 passenger cars last month. The industry attributed the increase in passenger car sales to the reduction in their prices, brought about by the implementation of the new excise tax law.

Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. grabbed the largest portion of the market, with a 37.56-percent share. Toyota sold 2,448 units last month, or 21.9 percent higher than the 2,007 units it sold during the same period last year.

Toyota was followed by Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp.,which sold 1051 units last month. The figure was 1.74 percent higher than the 1,033 units it sold in January 2003. Mitsubishi took 16.12 percent of the market.

Honda Cars Philippines Inc. was the biggest seller to the domestic market last month, accounting for 15.63 percent share of the market. Sales of Honda reached 1,019 units last month. The figure, however, was 30 percent lower than the 1,455 units it sold during the same period last year.

Organic farming: Venture with a conscience

By Maurice Malanes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
(2nd of a series)

FEATURE

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Since Greg Kitma shifted to biodynamic farming 10 years ago, he established a system of trading vegetables that did away with middlemen.

He has since practically controlled the prices of his produce, which he brings to families in Makati City and Alabang.

In Baguio City, 15 regular customers also patronize his crops. These include watercress, broccoli, lettuce, cabbage, spinach, celery, onion leeks, beans, peas and other vegetables used in making chopsuey.

He sells his vegetables at almost the same price as those that are chemically or conventionally produced.

Like Kitma, Cesar Abalos also developed his own market for vegetables here and in Metro Manila. Abalos likewise practically dictates his prices.

"My customers patronize my produce because they trust and appreciate the way I grow vegetables that ensure their life and health," says Kitma.

Kitma programmed his cropping patterns and designed his farm to meet the year-round vegetable needs of his customers.

To ensure that his farm soil has time to rest and be reinvigorated, he left fallow almost half of his farm, which is under a greenhouse. He will raise vegetables in the greenhouse during the rainy season.

Through careful farm planning and crop scheduling, Kitma has been happily netting a monthly income that is more than enough to send his three children to school.

Kitma dreams of getting more farmers to be involved in organic farming. He plans to build quarters to accommodate other farmers who want to learn about biodynamic farming.

Kitma and Abalos were able to turn their backs on chemical farming because both were convinced that a gentler and healthier agriculture practice, which treats the land as a living organism, was viable.

This alternative option can spread far and wide, says Abalos, if more farmers can farm and do business "with conscience and responsibility."

Retailers and promoters of naturally grown vegetables in Metro Manila often ask why Benguet and other Igorot farmers seemed unable to appreciate the growing market for organic vegetables.

But the fact is, many Benguet farmers actually know about the organic farming trend. It is just that various "fear factors" prevent them from having a change of heart.

Since 2001, Rosemarie Bestre, 30, a farmer-entrepreneur from Buguias town, for example, sought out individuals and organizations that promote organic farming.

Bestre and her husband, Ringor, 31, have been engaged in chemical conventional farming since 1992. They grew cabbage, potatoes and carrots.

Bestre was inspired to go organic when the local vegetable industry was hit by pests and the ill effects of globalization.

Leaf-miner pests threaten wide areas of potato farms while soil-borne fungi and bacteria continue to infest cabbage plantations.

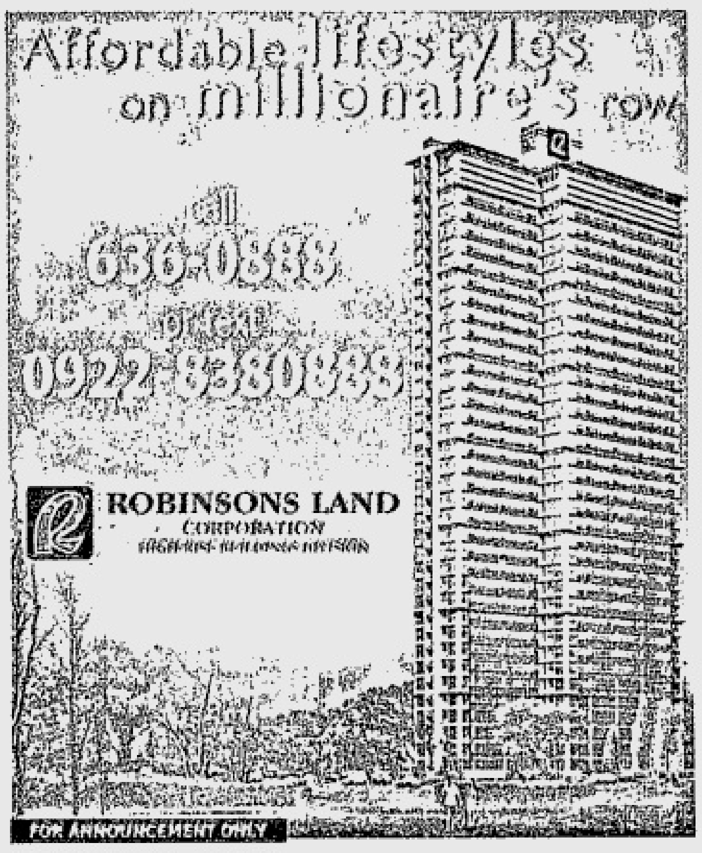
Environmental scientists have traced the pest and disease problems to the overuse of chemicals, which, they say, upset the ecological balance in the commercial farms of Benguet.

Another challenge to the local industry is liberalized vegetable importation and smuggling, which Igorot farmers are now leaving to candidates for the May elections to solve.

Through her own initiative, Bestre contacted an organic farming organization in Japan where she trained in 2002.

Interested, eager and willing, Bestre intends to soon apply what she learned in her family's three-hectare farm.

(To be continued)



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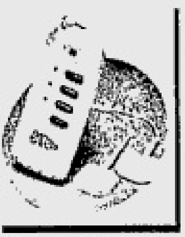

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BMW 323i 2000 Titanium Silver, 32,000 km, P1,600,000
BMW 318i Limo 2003 Steel Gray, 12,000 km, P1,625,000
BMW 318i Limo 2003 Titanium Silver, 9,000 km, P1,625,000
BMW 318i Limo 2003 Orient Blue, 6,000 km, P1,650,000
BMW 318i Exec 2003 Orient Blue, 9,000 km, P2,000,000
BMW 325i Exec 2003 Titanium Silver, 12,500 km, P2,300,000
BMW 325i M Sport 2003 Imola Red, 5,500 km, P2,450,000
BMW 525i Exec 2002 Titanium Silver, 13,000 km, P2,525,000
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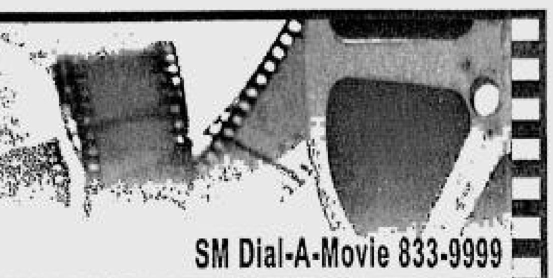

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2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MILAN
4 MAGIC KITCHEN
5 MONA LISA SMILE
6 WISHING STAIRS
7 CHASING LIBERTY
8 LAST SAMURAI

SM CITY CEBU
1 LAST SAMURAI
2 STUCK ON YOU
3 BROTHER BEAR
4 MONA LISA SMILE
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
6 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
7 MILAN
8 TWINS EFFECT

SM CITY BACOOR
1 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 MILAN
5 CHASING LIBERTY
6 MILAN
7 MAGIC KITCHEN
8 WISHING STAIRS

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 WRONG TURN
2 MILAN
3 BROTHER BEAR
4 LAST SAMURAI

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MILAN
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

SM BICUTAN
1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MILAN
4 WISHING STAIRS

SM CITY BAGUIO
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1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 THE GRUDGE
3 MILAN
4 STUCK ON YOU

SM STA. MESA
1 MILAN
2 LAST SAMURAI
3 CHASING LIBERTY
4 WISHING STAIRS
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
6 MAGIC KITCHEN
7 HAUNTED MANSION
8 SHIRI
9 MONA LISA SMILE
10 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE

SM SOUTHMALL
1 MAGIC KITCHEN
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 CHASING LIBERTY
4 MILAN
5 SHIRI
6 LAST SAMURAI
7 WISHING STAIRS
8 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
9 MILAN
10 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 SHIRI
2 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
3 IN THE CUT
4 LAST SAMURAI
5 MAGIC KITCHEN
6 MILAN
7 CHASING LIBERTY
8 HAUNTED MANSION
9 MILAN
10 MONA LISA SMILE
11 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
12 WISHING STAIRS

SM CITY MARILAO
1 DIABLO
2 MILAN
3 STUCK ON YOU
4 HAUNTED MANSION

SM CITY ILOILO
1 MEMENTO MORI
2 RESERVED
3 MILAN
4 BROTHER BEAR
5 STUCK ON YOU
6 LAST SAMURAI
7 RESERVED
8 HAUNTED OFFICE

SM MEGAMALL
1 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
2 I AM DINA
3 MAGIC KITCHEN
4 CHASING LIBERTY
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 PELIKULA AT LIPUNAN
7 SHIRI
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9 MILAN
10 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
11 MILAN
12 ANIMATION FESTIVAL

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 MILAN
4 MAGIC KITCHEN

SM CITY MANILA
1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 MONA LISA SMILE
3 I AM DINA
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 LAST SAMURAI
7 A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
8 SHIRI
9 MILAN
10 WISHING STAIRS
11 STUCK ON YOU
12 MAGIC KITCHEN

SM CITY DAVAO
1 MILAN
2 THE GATHERING
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 TWINS EFFECT
5 MONA LISA SMILE
6 STUCK ON YOU

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 STUCK ON YOU
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 IN THE CUT
5 MILAN
6 MILAN

SM CITY LUCENA
1 BROTHER BEAR
2 MILAN
3 THE GRUDGE
4 LAST SAMURAI

THE PODIUM CINEMA

1 HAUNTED MANSION
11:05 FS/11:25
MF/1:20/3:15/5:10/7:05/
9:00/10:30 LFS/11:00
LMF/12:30 END

2 CHASING LIBERTY
11:15 FS/11:45
MF/2:00/4:15/6:30/
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LMF/1:00 END

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1 MILAN
2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 MILAN
4 MONA LISA SMILE

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 HAUNTED MANSION
THX GUARANTEED SEATS 3 CHASING LIBERTY 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5 MAGIC KITCHEN
6 MILAN
7 WISHING STAIRS

GB1 GREENBELT 1
ArtFilm 1 SPANISH LOVE FILMFEST
2 MILAN 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
Onstage
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GB3 GREENBELT 3
THX GUARANTEED SEATS 1 CHASING LIBERTY 1:20 3:50 6:20 8:50 11:20
THX GUARANTEED SEATS 2 MILAN 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30 11:00
GUARANTEED SEATS 3 I AM DINA 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30 11:00
GUARANTEED SEATS 4 THE LAST SAMURAI 1:30 4:30 7:30 10:30
GUARANTEED SEATS 5 HAUNTED MANSION

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3 MILAN
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5 MONAL LISA SMILE

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1 LAST SAMURAI
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2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MOUNSTER SHARK
4

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8
9

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8 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
9 TWIN EFFECTS

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5

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4 MAGIC KITCHEN

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2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 MAGIC KITCHEN
4 MILAN
5 WISHING STAIRS

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2 DIABLO

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta Center
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7 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

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3 STUCK ON YOU
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4 STUCK ON YOU

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3 MILAN

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3 HAUNTED MANSION
4 MILAN

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2 MILAN

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2 MILAN
3 CHAISING LIBERTY

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4 MILAN

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4 MILAN

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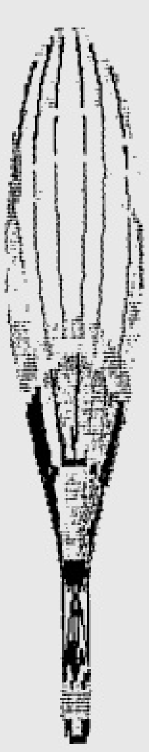

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REVO w/driver 9272821

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8990215

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% CAR LOAN 6567685

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0357

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

CAR BUSNES OFW 524-3197

1.5% 1HR CAR LOAN3743803

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

AUDIO/ VIDEO

Aowa Home&Ent Sys Cmplete Bnew 0917-8214936

BUY/SELL

EDUC PLAN 0918-3972820

EDUCATION PLANS 7800106

ELECTRONIC & INDUSTRIAL EQUIP

FOR SALE: CARLYLE SEMI- HERMETIC COMPRESSORS Specs: Carlyle 06EF275 (w/o Unloader) 230 VAC / 460 VAC, 6 cylinder 30HP (Nominal), 75.0 CFM @1750 RPM, R-22 As Is Where Is Contact: Engr. Doming Marquez 8384921 8384435

WANTED TO BUY

BUY • SELL • PAWN
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Repair / Polsh Any watch
MANILA WATCH EXCHANGE
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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that Canlubang Golf & Country Club Stock Cert.# 0059 in the name of Bonifacio I. Sison was lost. If no contest received new stock cert. will be issued
(PDI-Jan 29,Feb.5 & 12, 2004)

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
The *Caraballo and Southern Cordillera Agricultural Development Programme* is an integrated development project of the Department of Agriculture jointly funded by the Government of the Philippines and the European Union.

Invitation for Expression of Interest
Local Technical Assistant
CROP PRODUCTION SPECIALIST

CASCADE is a rural development project operating in the uplands of Nueva Vizcaya, Benguet and Nueva Ecija. The Programme is currently in need of one (1) Local Technical Assistant (LTA) or Specialist in the field of Crop Production Management for a period of four (4) months, who shall:

- Formulate on-farm crop production modules applying the technologies developed and/or promoted by CASCADE;
- Conduct trainings in line with the technology guides developed for or by LGU partners and CASCADE;
- Provide appropriate and adequate technical content of IEC materials and technology guides prepared for or by the Programme; and
- Provide technical advice and inputs to all crop-related projects and activities under the Agricultural Production System Development Component.

Applications are invited from qualified agriculturists with specialization in crop science, agronomy or horticulture. Applicants should have at least two (2) years technical involvement in extensive or commercial on-farm or research station crop-production projects.

Letter of interest together with full CVs and other pertinent documents in support of the application should be submitted not later than **20 February 2004**. Only shortlisted candidates shall receive an acknowledgement and shall be given the full Tems of Reference not later than **27 February 2004**. All correspondence should be addressed to the following:

The Project Co-Directors
DA-CASCADE
Bonfal West, 3700 Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya
Tel. No. (078)321-2605 & 321-4128
Telefax No. (078) 805-3611
E-mail: cascade_erp@yahoo.co.uk

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
The *Caraballo and Southern Cordillera Agricultural Development Programme* is an integrated development project of the Department of Agriculture jointly funded by the Government of the Philippines and the European Union.

Invitation for Expression of Interest
O & M Development Facilitator
For Support Infrastructures

CASCADE is a rural development project operating in the uplands of Nueva Vizcaya, Benguet and Nueva Ecija. The Programme is currently in need of one (1) Operation and Maintenance Development Facilitator for Support Infrastructures, for a period of five (5) months, who shall:

- Develop training design and modules for footbridges, multi-crop drying pavements and storage facilities;
- Conduct beneficiary/group training for 107 identified support infrastructures; and
- Conduct LGU training on Operation and Maintenance of various support infrastructures.

Applications are invited from qualified engineers, graduates of agriculture-related courses or social sciences courses. Applicants should have experience in the preparation and management of training program, planning and strategy formulation specifically on Operation and Maintanance of various support infrastructures.

Letters of interest together with full CVs and other pertinent documents in support of the application should be submitted not later than **20 February 2004**. Only shortlisted candidates shall receive an acknowledgement and shall be given the full Tems of Reference not later than **27 February 2004**. All correspondence should be addressed to the following:

The Project Co-Directors
DA-CASCADE
Bonfal West, 3700 Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya
Tel. No. (078)321-2605 & 321-4128
Telefax No. (078) 805-3611
E-mail: cascade_erp@yahoo.co.uk

Department of Agriculture
CARABALLO & SOUTHERN CORDILLERA
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
A PROGRAMME FOR SELF-RELIANCE

ERP-CASCADE in its final phase of implementation is urgently seeking

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM MANAGER
(Development Management Officer IV, SG 22 - P19,000.00+)

The responsibilities of this post include Network and Database Administration and Information System Coordination.

The ideal candidate must satisfy the following minimum requirements:

- Bachelors of Science in Computer Engineering/Computer Science or other related fields;
- Five (5) years professional experience in database development and network/database management;
- Extensive Knowledge of MS Windows Operations (XP, 2000 Advanced Server) Visual Basic and Crystal Reports;
- Experience in Technical Report Writing.

The position is co-terminus with the project that will be closed in **July 27, 2004.**

Due to the urgency of the recruitment, interested applicants must send not later than **February 20, 2004**, their Letter of Intent, Comprehensive CV/Resumé indicating contact phone numbers as well as two (2) contactable references and a 2x2 ID picture to:

(Note: The Project will only respond to applicants meeting the above requirements.)

The Project Co-Directors: ERP-CASCADE
Maharlika Highway, Bonfal West, Bayombong, 3700 Nueva Vizcaya
E-mail: cascade_erp@yahoo.co.uk (Fax: 078-8053611)

CASCADE is a special project of the Department of Agriculture funded by the Philippines Government and the European Commission

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice is given that the estate of late LEON F. PELAEZ was extrajudicially settled by his heir as per Doc. No. 490; Page No. 112; Book No. 58; Series of 2003 before Notary Public Manuel F. De Jesus of Quezon City.
PDI-Jan 29, Feb 5 &12,2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late CLAUDIA L. ORCA has been extrajudicially settled by and among the heirs in a document dated January 26, 2004 and sworn to before Notary Public Atty. Edson P. Bruce of Binangonan Rizal as per Doc No. 78; Page No. 16; Book No. VII; Series of 2004.
(PDI-Feb 12, 19 & 26, 2004)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

RETIRE 2YRS 09189051567

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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EXTRA INCOME
0919-6912701

Health & Income Benefits from Aroma Therapy. LITA 360-0588 or 0927-4930971

RTW Inventory 09167940002

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

PLEASE BE INFORMED THAT **HORAMABI BUILDERS** HAS CHANGED ITS BUSINESS STATUS FROM **SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP** TO **CORPORATION** UNDER THE NAME **HORAM-ABI BUILDERS INCORPORATED** WITH BUSINESS ADDRESS AT JADE ST., TAGLESVILLE SUBD., SAN JOSE, BALANGA CITY, BATAAN.
(PDI–Feb. 12, 2004)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

SINGAPOREAN looking for partners to develop new industry with patented technology 0927-4936266

Wanting to earn xtra 75-200T per month be consumer franchisee just like me call 8076619 09178377531 Resh

Work By Phone, Earn Up 2
P30T/month!
Female, 28&up! 892-7828

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

DIRECT SALE

JEWELRY NO CAPITAL CONSIG TRMS MST B EMPLOYD 984-2965

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT SALE!
Foodwarmer, low-hipressure
Chicken Roteserie, Sinks
Ice Crusher, Bonesaw,
Hod Gridle, Fryer 9961170

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

WANTED DRIVER, HELPER w/ NBI Tel. 895-0775

FEMALE

CT SCAN TECH BS RAD TECH ON JOB TRAINING FEMLE 2640 RIZAL AVE STA CRUZ MLA TEL 7111967 7126452

Med Rep 09195202084

Sec/Manicurist 7215055

MALE/FEMALE

AUDIT CLERK
Complit Vsyan 5509015

2 Sales Executive Executive Assistant Auto Mech./Electrician Const. Mat. Sales Mngr. Computer Mngr. & Analyst Uniform Sales Exec. Furnitur Painter Call 8913653, Look for Jhoey

Direct Hire Ofc Mktg/Staff 18-50 Hi-Salary Agnes 4388729

FREE CAREGIVER TRAINING PROGRAM W/CERTIFICATE 302-6893 339-7407 4043528

Hair Dresser 415-6051

MKTG STF 09206115766 ABA

OFC MKTG AST 09203562010

OFC MKTG AST 09176649994

OFC MKTG PERSONEL
Coll/Grad/Lvl (18-45)w/w/o exp 995-7774 / 438-9340 Ms.Hana

OFC MKTG STF 09193121909

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375 KVA GENERATOR FOR SALE

We wish to invite interested parties to bid for a 375 KVA Perkins 2000 Series Generator as well as Paintings.
LOCATION:
Building E.
Bonifacio Center,
Bonifacio Global City,
Taguig, Metro Manila

For inquiries and further details, please call Ms. Marie Samson at 818-3601 local 3110 or Mr. Ed Çruz at (0917) 822-0270. Offers should be sent on or before February 13, 2004.

DAEWOO AND NISSAN BUSES FOR SALE

For inquiries and further details, please call Mr. Ed Cruz at (0917) 822 0270

Valentine's Extravaganza

IN CELEBRATION of Valentine's Day, FoodParks by Raintree will fill the air with the spirit of love. The mood is set as the Food Parks become venues for fun and romance. From laid back acoustic performances, soothing string melodies to dating games and movie nights, we have something for everyone.

Feel the love again at Food Odyssey, 11/F LKG Tower, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Free movie nights featuring some of the best movies every Wednesday to help ease the stresses of the week. On February 13, it is time for singles to mingle, especially this 2004 leap year. No date needed in this singles party, just a desire to have fun! At the 4th level of The Enterprise Center, Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, home of Foodpark at the Enterprise, songs of life and love will resonate as budding young artists perform live every Wednesday and Friday evenings. The lunch and evening crowds are in for a treat, as exciting musicians get everyone feeling the love. Food and Art Galerie at 12/F GT Tower International, Ayala Avenue corner H.V. Dela Costa, Makati City will be filled with the romantic sounds of a strings ensemble during lunchtime on February 13. Food and Art Galerie celebrates Valentine's with "Gayuma: A Feast for the Heart," where new and exciting aphrodisiac meals will be served up by the different food stalls. It is a groovy kind of love on February 13 at The Marketplace in Times Plaza, U.N. Avenue as singles find their mate in a dating game with a twist. February is also a time to party at The Marketplace as Friday disco nights make everyone's adrenaline run. FoodParks by Raintree celebrates romance with "The Sweetest Thing." Customers with the most romantic idea of expressing their love win prizes that will make Valentine's extra special. And to those interested of knowing what Cupid has in store for them, fortunetellers will visit the Food Parks during the month of February.

Whichever Food Park you choose, the feeling of love will surely warm your hearts. For inquiries regarding the events, please call the Marketing Department at 752-5681.

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Bohol
MUNICIPALITY OF SAN MIGUEL

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Local Government Unit of San Miguel, Bohol invites all qualified bidders/suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid on March 19, 2004 at 9:30 AM of the supply and delivery of heavy equipments as described:

1.	No. of Unit/s	: 1 unit only
	Equipment Type	: LGP Type Bulldozer
	Operating Weight	: 17.14 Tons
	Type of Operator's Cabin	: Open Canopy Type
	Type of Sprocket	: Fixed Type
	Make	: Komatsu
	Model	: D60P-6
	Engine	: Cummins NH220
	Rated Output	: 155 HP
	Condition	: Slightly used, reconditioned and upgraded
2.	No. of Unit/s	: 1 unit only
	Type of Equipment	: Wheel Type Excavator
	Type of Operator's Cabin	: Close Cab
	Model	: PW60-3
	Bucket Capacity	: 0.250 cubic meter
	Condition	: Slightly Used, reconditioned, with tools, brand new tires & batteries
3.	No. of Unit/s	: 1 unit only
	Type of Equipment	: Vibratory Compactor
	Make	: Bomag or Ingersoll Rand or Dynapac
	Model	: BW170 or SP48 or CA15
	Operating Weight	: 7 Tons
	Condition	: Slightly used, reconditioned, with tools, brand new tires & batteries
4.	No. of Unit/s	: 2 units
	Type of Equipment	: 6 Wheeler Dump Truck
	Make	: Isuzu or Fuso
	Model	: Forward or Fighter
	Engine	: 6BG1 or 6D15
	Dump Box Capacity	: 6.0 cubic meters
	Condition	: Slightly used, reconditioned and upgraded, with tools, brand new tires & batteries
	Tire Size	. Over Size (8.25 x 20)
	Note	: 2 dump trucks must be the same make/model

Interested parties shall submit all bid documents not later than 10:00 A.M. on/or before March 04, 2004 for the pre-qualification. Bid forms are available at the Office of the Municipal Engineer or Municipal Treasurer, Municipality of San Miguel, Bohol, Telefax No. 520-3016.

The **BAC** reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or parts thereof, waive any defects or formality in the proposal received and to accept such bid most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) TRINIDAD R. MILLARE
BAC-Chairman
LGU-San Miguel

(PDI – February 5 & 12, 2004)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is to inform the public that **THALA MAJAL RAMOS SANCHEZ** is no longer connected with **ACROSS MARKETING** and **PERFECT LOGISTICS PHILS., INC.** Any and all transactions made after **August 5, 2002** through her will not be honored by the company.

THE MANAGEMENT

(PDI - Feb. 12. 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Pangasinan
MUNICIPALITY OF BOLINAO

OFFICE OF THE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF PROCUREMENT

Notice is hereby given that the Local Government of Bolinao, Pangasinan, Philippines is to procure a Landing Barge to service the Santiago Island-Mainland Bolinao ferry points with the following minimum ship particulars: **Gross Ton: 125; Net Ton: 80; Dimension: 32 x 7 x 1.25 m; Hull Material: Steel.** Prospective suppliers/bidders are required to send their Letters of Intent addressed to the Bids and Awards Committee, Bolinao, Pangasinan fax no. 075-554-2523 c/o Municipality of Bolinao with the following documents: Company Profile; Vessel Registration; Information on location and date where the equipment can be inspected.

The following are the procurement schedule:	Date
1. Submission of Letters of Intent	Not later than Feb. 23, 2004
2. Inspection period and pre-qualification of prospective bidders	Feb. 24 – March 1, 2004
3. Pre-bid conference	March 4, 2004
4. Bidding	March 8, 2004

Additional information may be obtained from the Office of the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat (075-554-2811).

(Sgd.) WILFREDO V. CASTELO
Chairman

(PDI – February 12, 19 & 26, 2004)

OBITUARIES

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

"There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heaven..."
Ecclesiastes 3:11

SAMSON B. BAUTISTA

Franchisee of Chowking Food Corporation
Tuguegarao City, Cagayan

Peacefully joined his Creator on February 8, 2004 at the age of 46.

His wife **Rosalita** and children **Patricia Gay, Loraine Angelica, Emelita Corazon** and **Rainna Samantha**; mother **Corazon B. Bautista** and mother-in-law **Emiliana Bangayan**, brothers, sister, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces request your prayers and special petitions for the peaceful and eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies at St. Peter's Cathedral, Parish Pastoral Canter, Tuguegarao City.

Interment will be on February 21, 2004, 9:00 a.m. at the Tuguegarao Chinese Cemetery.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES
OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)
DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS •
FREE OBIT DESIGN

IRENE CRUZ PUEBLO

of Jaen, Nueva Ecija joined our Creator on February 11, 2004 at the age of 75.

Her body, now lying in state at the St. Peter Memorial Chapel on Quezon Boulevard, Quezon City, will be transferred to her residence in San Isidro, Nueva Ecija tomorrow, Friday.

Interment will be on Sunday, 10 a.m. at the Jaen Public Cemetery.

Her loving husband Juan Pueblo and loved ones request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

National Power Corporation

MMSD-2004-02
February 02, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Materials Management Services Division (MMSD), Materials Management Department (MMD), National Pow er Corporation invites all parties interested to apply for eligibility and to bid for the service Contracts listed below.

LOGMMSD2004-0001: SUPPLY OF LABOR, TOOLS/EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES/MATERIALS AND SUPERVI SION FOR THE MANPOWER REQUIREMENT OF NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION OFFICES, PLANTS AND OTHER INSTALLATIONS RELA TED TO JANITORIAL, LAWN AND GARDEN/LANDSCAPING, SKILLED, SEMI-SKILLED AND OTHER ALLIED SERVICES.

SCHEDULE NO.	FG	NPC OFFICES / PLANTS/ INSTALLATIONS	AREA/LOCATION	NO. OF MAN POWER	SUBTOTAL COST ESTIMATE PER INSTALLATION LABOR AND MATERIALS
I	HRAF	FMD: NPC Building 1	Diliman, Quezon City	31	9,870,321.20
II	HRAF	FDM: NPC-Head Office Complex	Diliman, Quezon City	18	4,725,117.89
III	TMS	ADP Navotas-II Gas Turbine PP	Navotas, Metro Manila	7	2,210,387.38
		ERSD Warehouse/Stockyard	San Jose, Substation, Bulacan	2	671,493.24
	SPUG	SPUG Office/Stockyard	Minuyan, SJDM, Bulacan	11	2,800,827.94
	IPP	Navotas II Storage Tank Facilities	Navotas, Metro Manila	2	704,432.10
	GEN	Angat Watershed Team	Norzagaray, Bulacan	3	622,530.28
	HRAF	FMD Italian Village	Angat, Bulacan	2	415,020.17
	LOG	Mexico Central Stockyard	Mexico, Pampanga	15	3,304,945.34
		TOTAL		42	10,729,836.44
IV	HRAF	FMD NPC Old Building	Port Area, Manila	20	7,092,244.67
		TTD Training Fac. Ext.	Sucat, Parañaque City	2	801,042.28
	LOG	MMD NPC Warehouse	Port Area, Manila	3	1,627,026.70
	TMS	EMD Laboratory	Port Area, Manila	1	342,777.87
		Manila Thermal PP	Ermita, Manila	15	4,493,404.31
		MRMD/MEC Fab-Shop	Buli, Muntinlupa City	7	2,449,333.33
		Island Grid Project Off.	Sucat, Parañaque City	2	757,511.29
		Tiwi-Makban Rehab Project Off.	Sucat, Parañaque City	2	502,430.85
	S&S	Satellite Office	Sucat, Parañaque City	1	320,196.21
		TOTAL		53	18,386,567.50
V	HRAF	FMD NPC Resort Village	Bagac, Bataan	42	9,925,700.68
		FMD NPC Training Ctr.	Bagac, Bataan	12	3,065,891.41
		FMD Eman Beach Resort	Morong, Bataan	3	612,432.18
	TMS	EMD Laboratories	Bagac, Bataan	4	939,256.51
		TOTAL		61	14,543,280.78
VI	HRAF	BTPP Preservation Project	Limay, Bataan	14	3,237,850.05
		Bataan Gas Turbine Pl.	Limay, Bataan	3	764,661.69
		FMD BTPP Housing Cpd.	Limay, Bataan	5	1,020,720.31
	IPP	Bataan Comb. Cycle PP	Limay, Bataan	13	3,078,841.61
		TOTAL		35	8,102,073.65
VII	GEN	Magat Hydroelectric Plant	Magat, Isabela	38	7,542,486.72
		Magat Watershed Team	Magat, Isabela	2	337,654.28
		Pantabangan Watershed Area Team	Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija	2	408,266.84
		TOTAL		42	8,288,407.84
VIII	GEN	Masinloc Coal Fired TPP	Masinloc, Zambales	71	17,109,600.00
IX	TMS	Luzon Gen. Project	San Roque, Pangasinan	6	2,116,623.30
			Binalonan, Pangasinan	2	345,094.57
			Casiguran, Aurora	1	166,302.63
	GEN	Watershed Area Team	San Roque, Pangasinan	1	566,131.22
		Flood Forecasting (FFWSDO)	San Roque, Pangasinan	1	329,267.14
		Upper Agno Watershed Area Team	Ambuklao, Bokod, Benguet	2	332,851.69
	SPUG	Basco Diesel PP	Basco, Batanes	1	777,870.38
		Sabtang Diesel PP	Sabtang, Batanes	1	1,547,800.71
		Itbayat Diesel PP	Itbayat, Batanes	1	1,547,800.71
		Calayan Diesel PP	Calayan, Cagayan	1	300,099.26
		Palanan (Isabela) Diesel PP	Palanan, Isabela	1	319,876.27
		Casiguran (Aurora) Diesel PP	Casiguran, Aurora	1	409,923.65
		Lubuagan Diesel PP	Lubuagan, Kalinga	1	258,195.61
		Kabugao Diesel PP	Kabugao, Apayao	1	374,678.55
	S&S	Satellite Office	Baguio City	2	364,545.50
		TOTAL		23	9,766,001.48
X	TMS	PMD-CBK Project	Kalayaan, Laguna	2	500,943.80
		APD Malaya GT Plant	Pililla, Rizal	3	736,279.18
	IPP	Malaya LFO Tank Farms	Pililla, Rizal	3	752,315.37
	GEN	Caliraya Watershed	Kalayaan, Laguna	8	1,555,586.84
	LOG	Kalayaan Warehouse	Kalayaan, Laguna	12	3,002,636.72
	HRAF	FMD Camarin. Guesthouse	Cavinti, Laguna	7	2,892,142.49
		FMD Japanese Garden	Cavinti, Laguna	12	2,333,379.95
		FMD Caliraya Housing Compound	Lumban, Laguna	1	194,448.33
		FMD Bolocan Guesthouse	Majayjay, Laguna	1	104,448.33
		FMD Puerto Azul Guesthouse	Ternate, Cavite	1	200,357.28
		TOTAL		50	13,162,537.07
XI	GEN	12,558Mak-Ban GPP	Bitin, Bay, Laguna	56	12,558,524.32
		Makban Watershed Area Team	Limao, Calauan, Laguna	3	583,344.99
	TMS	APD Pinamucan DPP	Pinamucan, Batangas	10	2,204,994.87
		Tiwi-Makban Rehab Proj.	Bitin, Laguna	1	191,448.33
	SPUG	Tingloy Diesel PP	Tingloy, Batangas	1	993,871.80
	IPP	Ilijan Gas Serving Facility	Ilijan, Batangas	2	528,626.93
		TOTAL		73	17,063,811.03
XII	GEN	Tiwi Geothermal Power Plant	Tiwi, Albay	55	8,396,958.29
		Tiwi Watershed Team	Tiwi, Albay	3	466,033.89
	TMS	Tiwi-Makban Rehab Proj	Tiwi, Albay	1	155,344.63
		TOTAL		59	9,018,336.82
XIII	TMS	Palawan Backbone Project	Pto. Princesa, Palawan	4	1,189,665.52
	SPUG	Polillo Diesel PP	Polillo, Quezon	1	406,668.46
		Jomalig Diesel PP	Jomalig, Quezon	1	323,197.19
		Patnanungan Diesel PP	Patnanungan, Quezon	1	399,580.57
		OM Cam Opnatns. Divisions	Daraga, Albay	2	669,391.47
		Batan Diesel PP	Batan, Albay	1	958,740.01
		Rapu-rapu Diesel PP	Rapu-rapu Island, Albay	1	1,571,590.75
		Viga Diesel PP	Viga, Catanduanes	1	933,182.33
		Power Barge 110	Bato, Catanduanes	2	1,318,140.80
		OM-Palawan Area	Puerto Princesa, Palawan	1	468,033.65
		Puerto Princesa DPP	Puerto Princesa, Palawan	2	1,740,968.01
		Brooke's Point Substation	Brks. Pt., Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		El Nido Diesel PP	El Nido, Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		Roxas Diesel PP	Roxas, Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		Taytay Diesel PP	Taytay, Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		Cuyo Diesel PP	Cuyo, Palawan	2	629,448.50
		Cagayancillo Diesel PP	Cagayan, Palawan	1	584,959.24
		Busuanga Diesel PP	Coron, Busuanga	2	854,218.20
		Culion Diesel PP	Culion, Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		Balabac Diesel PP	Balabac, Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		San Vicente Diesel PP	San Vicente, Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		Linapacan Diesel PP	Linapacan, Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		Agutaya Diesel PP	Agutaya, Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		Araceli Diesel PP	Araceli, Palawan	1	1,574,665.40
		Power Barge 108	Pto. Prin., Palawan	3	949,551.31
	LOG	Ligao Warehouse & Stockyard	Ligao, Albay	6	1,011,207.47
		TOTAL		41	29,735,406.63
XIV	SPUG	OM-Mindoro/Romblon Area	Calapan, Mindoro Oriental	3	797,629.75
		Pulang Lupa DPP	San Jose, Mindoro Occ	2	598,694.63
		Mamburao Diesel PP	Mamburao, Mindoro Occ.	2	574,422.94
		Lubang Diesel PP	Lubang, Mindoro Occ.	2	354,735.20
		Boac Diesel PP	Boac, Marinduque	3	2,863,548.89
		Torrijos Diesel PP	Torrijos, Marinduque	1	273,798.82
		Power Barge 120	Mogpog, Marinduque	4	2,330,354.13
		Masbate Diesel PP	Mobo, Masbate	2	332,819.21
		Ticao Diesel PP	Ticao, Masbate	1	381,459.00
		Power Barge 105	Masbate Pier, Masbate	4	826,962.19
		Tablas Diesel PP	Tablas, Romblon	2	349,649.35
		Romblon, Diesel PP	Romblon, Romblon	2	349,649.35
		Sibuyan Diesel PP	Sibuyan, Romblon	1	399,874.06
		Corcuera Diesel PP	Corcuera, Romblon	1	399,874.06
		Banton Diesel PP	Banton, Romblon	1	399,874.06
		San Jose Diesel PP	San Jose, Romblon	1	399,874.06
		Concepcion Diesel PP	Concepcion, Romblon	1	399,874.06
		Power Barge 114	Romblon Pier, Romblon	1	369,333.36
		Power Barge 109	Tabas Island, Romblon	1	369,333.36
	GEN	Power Barge 102	Puerto Galera, Min. Occ	6	1,946,315.74
		TOTAL		41	14,728,066.20
XV	GEN	Bac-Man GPP	Bacon, Sorsogon	41	7,777,780.42
	TMS	Luzon Gen. Project	Sorsogon	1	155,344.63
		TOTAL		42	7,933,125.05
XVI	GEN	Leyte Geothermal PP	Tongonan, Leyte	30	9,403,490.29
	SPUG	Limasawa Diesel PP	Limasawa, Leyte	1	326,648.12
		TOTAL		31	9,730,138.41
XVII	GEN	Panay Diesel Power Plant	Dingle, Ilo-Ilo	15	3,933,556.60
		Power Barge 103	Estancia, Ilo-Ilo	6	1,669,503.14
		Power Barge 104	La Paz, Ilo-Ilo	6	1,548,165.40
	TMS	PMD Dingle DP-II	Dingle, Ilo-Ilo	2	507,427.78
	SPUG	Power Plant	Gigantes, Ilo-Ilo	1	423,635.13
		TOTAL		30	8,082,288.05
XVIII	SPUG	Camotes Diesel PP	Camotes, Cebu	2	388,355.41
		Bantayan Diesel PP	Bantayan, Cebu	2	642,912.72
		Pilar Diesel PP	Pilar, Cebu	1	388,872.30
		Doong Diesel PP	Doong, Cebu	1	342,114.86
		Guintarcan Diesel PP	Guintarcan, Cebu	1	251,263.41
		Power Barge 116	Madridejos, Cebu	2	487,598.36
		Biri Diesel PP	Biri, Samar	1	281,822.40
		Capul Diesel PP	Capul, Samar	1	268,113.89
		San Antonio Diesel PP	San Antonio, Samar	1	492,047.51
		Sto. Niño Diesel PP	Santo Niño, Samar	1	269,209.09
		San Vicente Diesel PP	San Vicente, Samar	1	297,193.15
		Tagapul-an Diesel PP	Tagapul-an, Samar	1	292,065.47
		Almagro Diesel PP	Almagro, Samar	1	210,302.56
		Zumaraga Diesel PP	Zumaraga, Samar	1	350,867.52
		Caluya (Antique) Diesel PP	Caluya, Antique	1	413,899.81
		Maripipi Diesel PP	Maripipi, Biliran	1	335,809.06
		Siquijor Diesel PP	Candaney, Siquijor	2	786,732.46
		Power Barge 113	Lazi, Siquijor	2	761,853.00
		Visayas Optns. Dept.	Cebu City	3	545,413.46
		Visayas Optns. Dept.	Naga, Cebu	4	863,786.00
	TMS	APD Cebu Diesel PP	Toledo City, Cebu	19	3,571,069.78
	IPP	Visayas Office	Cebu City	1	437,526.38
	S&S	Satellite Office	Cebu City	1	222,639.23
	GEN	Thermal Gen. OVP Office	Cebu City	2	363,606.97
		TOTAL		53	13,266,296.81
XIX	GEN	Bohol Diesel PP	Tagbilaran City, Bohol	15	3,404,131.45
		Loboc HE Plant	Loboc, Bohol	6	1,624,439.76
		Power Barge 101	Maribojoc, Bohol	6	1,179,784.13
		TOTAL		27	6,208,355.33
XX	GEN	Palimpinon Geothermal PP	Valencia, Negros Oriental	29	6,162,646.57
		Amlan HE Plant	Amlan, Negros Oriental	6	2,193,783.39
		TOTAL		35	8,356,429.96
XXI	GEN	Batangas Coal Fired TPP	Calaca, Batangas	88	17,650,060.97
					P 256,535,919.30

Application for eligibility and to bid is open to all janitorial and manpower agencies who met the following criteria:

1) a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships;
   b. Partnerships duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines;
   c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines;
   d. Entities forming themselves into a joint venture that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract: *Provided, however*, that Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); or
   e. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA).
   f. Actively registered with the SEC and or DTI.
   g. Has been operating for at least two (2) years.
   h. Have no record of unsatisfactory performance or disqualification to participate public bidding with NPC or in any kind of Contract with Philippine Government.
2) The value of the prospective bidders largest single contract similar to the contract to be bid must be at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid (ABC).
3) The prospective bidder must present a commitment from a licensed bank to extend a credit line if awarded the contract to be bid, or cash deposit certificate in an amount not lower than 10% of the ABC to be bid, or must have a Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the ABC to be bid.
4) Must have no pending administrative case for violation of the SSS and minimum wage laws, rules and regulation.

Contract duration is for two (2) years unless sooner terminated Sourcing of Funding is thru Internal Cash Generation. Only bids within the Approved Budget for Contract to be bid shall be accepted.

Eligibility and bid documents will be available for issuance from **February 13 to February 23, 2004**, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Materials Management Services Division (MMSD) - Materials Management Department (MMD) Bldg. 1, National Power Corporation, cor. BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, upon submission and presentation of original document of SEC/DTI/CDA registration and payment of non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos Only (P1,000.00) per schedule.

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for eligibility and bid documents, forms and statements shall be on March 8, 2004 at 10:00 a.m., Morones Function Room. If the date is declared a non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted. A pre-bid conference shall be conducted on **February 24, 2004**, 2:00 p.m. at Kañao Function Room.

Single Stage Bidding with post qualification, under R.A. 9184 shall be applied for this project.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids, and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) LORENZO S. MARCELO
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee, MMSD-NPC

(PDI - Feb. 12 & 19, 2004)

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In Loving Memory

ANTONIO O. DEMETRIOU

Mayor, Tabaco, Albay, 1987-1992, 1992-1995, 1995-1998

Born on December 28, 1944
Died on February 5, 2004 in Houston, Texas, U.S.A.
After receiving the last rites of the Roman Catholic Church.

He is survived by his wife, **Maria Josefa Velasco-Demetriou**; children: **Christine, Michelle, Alexander** and **Ma. Josefa Ann**; son-in-law, **Niño Imperial**; parents **Solon M. Demetriou Sr**. and **Josefina Obias-Demetriou**, sisters: **Harriet, Jennifer** and **Evangeline**, brother **Solon Jr**.

His remains shall lie in state at the Santuario De San Antonio Parish, Capilla De La Virgen, Forbes Park, Makati City, this Saturday, February 14, 2004, until Sunday, February 15, 2004. He will be transferred on Monday, February 16, 2004 to Tabaco City, Albay.

INTERMENT WILL BE ANNOUNCED LATER.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Day is done
The Light of God shines
Work is over
Rest with God has come
Journey is ended
A Home in God is found

ADELAIDA GONZALEZ ARAULLO

of Malabon City and Guagua, Pampanga,
joined our CREATOR and her late husband, DR. ALFONSO H. ARAULLO,
on February 10, 2004 at the age of 96.

She will be missed by her children **Lyda & Cesar de Dios, Joe & Ampy, Manolo & Letty, Vicki Scrivens, Chito & Aleni, Mike & Carol, Ed & Lui, Marita & Vic Limlingan, Ramon & Praxie,** her grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Her body lies in state at the Faith Chapel
of the Don Bosco Mortuary, Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 14, 2004
at the Malabon Catholic Cemetery
after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Don Bosco Mortuary
and 2:00 p.m. Mass at San Bartolome Church in Malabon City.

The family requests for your prayers
for the eternal repose of her soul.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

— John 3:16

In Loving Memory

On the First Death Anniversary of

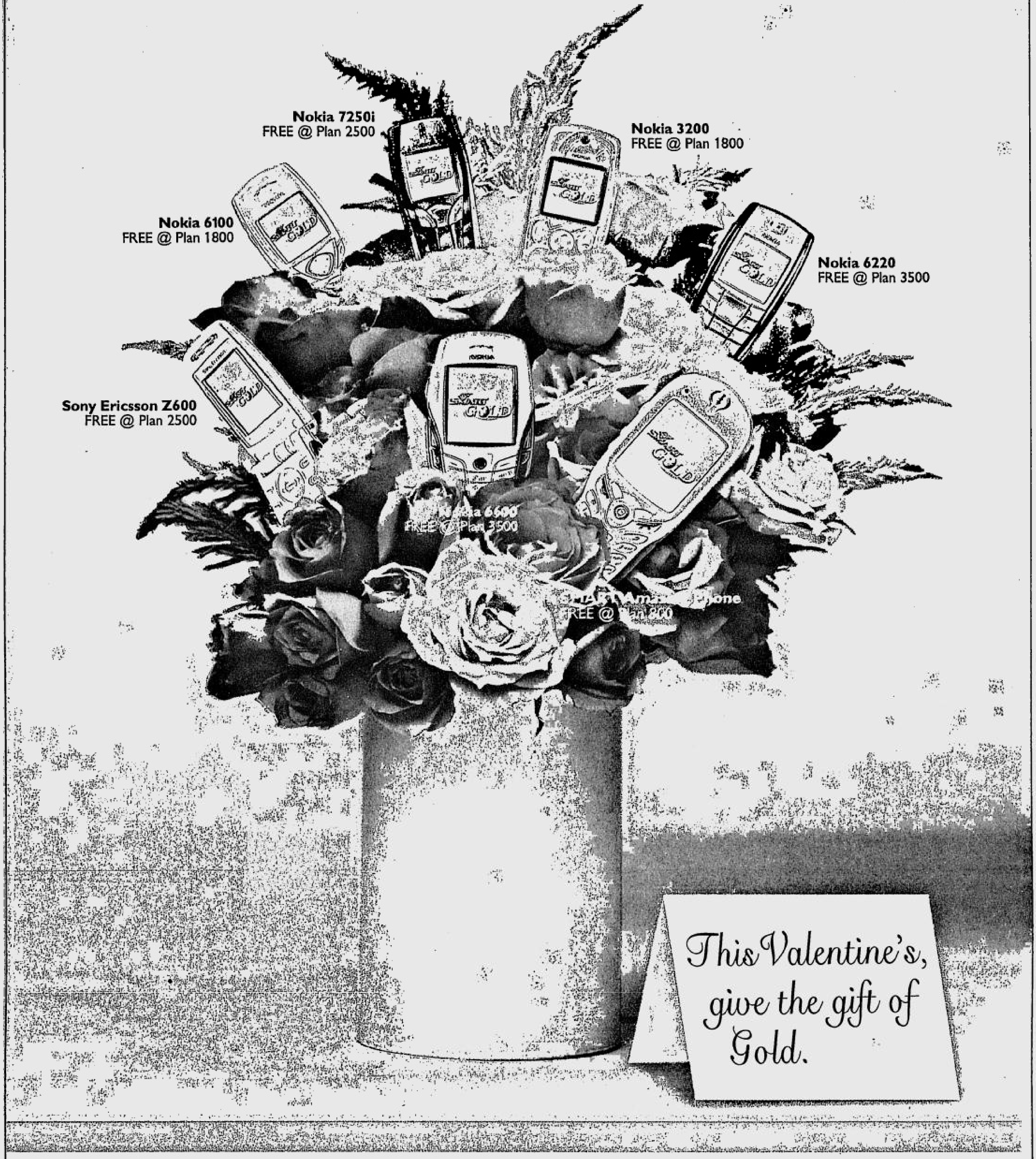
Dr. ROY P. VILLASOR

February 11, 1920 – February 13, 2003

His loving wife **Muchit Mejia Villasor**; children **Rogi** and **Rosarie**, **Mara** and **Gabby**, **Rean** and **Dina**; grandchildren **Regina, Arianna, Roy Tomas, Bea, Raffy, Angela, Anya** and **Hana** request relatives, friends and the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Holy Masses will be offered tomorrow, February 13, 2004 at the following:

St. Andrew the Apostle Bel-Air, Makati	6:30 a.m., 12:15 nn., 6:30 p.m.
Santuario de San Antonio Forbes Park, Makati	12:15 nn
VRPMC Chapel (Formerly Polymedic) Edsa	12:15 nn
St. Jerome Emiliani & St. Susana Parish Ayala-Alabang	12:15 nn
Parish of St. James the Great Ayala-Alabang	6:30 p.m.
Redemptorist Church Bacolod City	5:30 p.m.
Huaming Chinese Catholic Church Bacolod City	5:30 p.m.



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Free Text	200	250	300	350	400
SMART to SMART	P6.50	P6.00	P5.00	P4.50	P4.00
SMART to non-SMART*	P7.00	P6.50	P6.00	P5.50	P4.50
Text Fee after Free SMS	P1.00	P0.50	P0.50	P0.50	P0.50
IDD Rate**			$0.40		

*SMART to other cellphone networks, local, and NDD.

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Free Text	500	350	350	450	550	650
Free Minutes	20	100	210	350	500	750
SMART to SMART	P6.00	P5.50	P5.00	P4.50	P4.00	P3.50
SMART to non-SMART*	P7.50	P7.00	P6.50	P6.00	P5.50	P4.50
Text Fee after Free SMS	P1.00	P1.00	P0.50	P0.50	P0.50	P0.50
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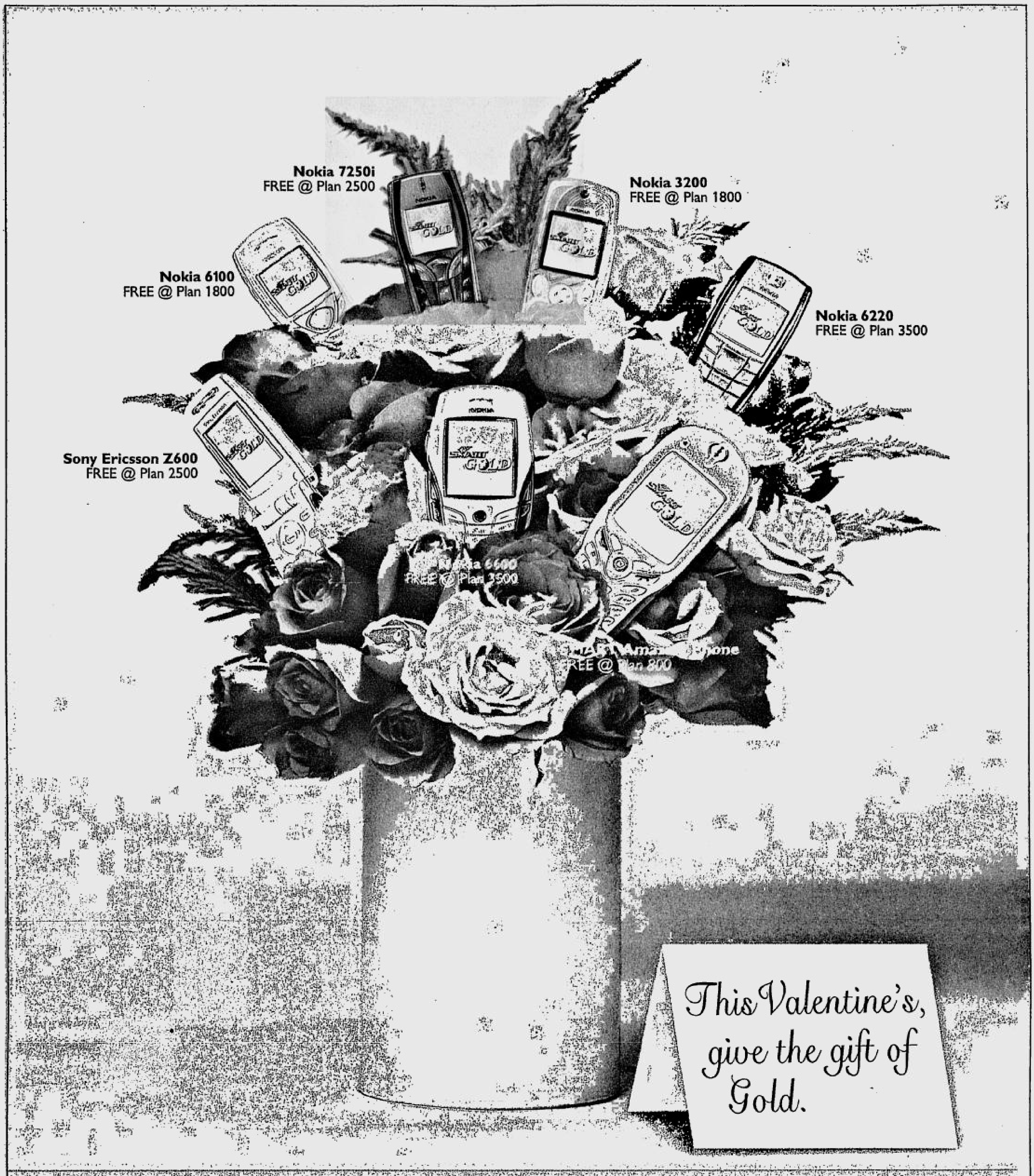

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MOTORING

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Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Gut Kaisa
31
ANGAT PINOY KAY

EXCESSIVE campaign material that obscure the vision of the driver.

The courteous convoy wins the 'motor vote'

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE ONE-OF-A-KIND spectacle that is the Philippine elections has begun in earnest, and one of the most visible signs of this is the campaign road show. On the literal road to the polls, candidates eyeing national positions are hell bent on covering as much territory as they can, hoping to wring out as much public visibility as they can in the three months before the votes are cast. Somewhere along the way, traffic risks have to be made, and these risks involve not just the candidate

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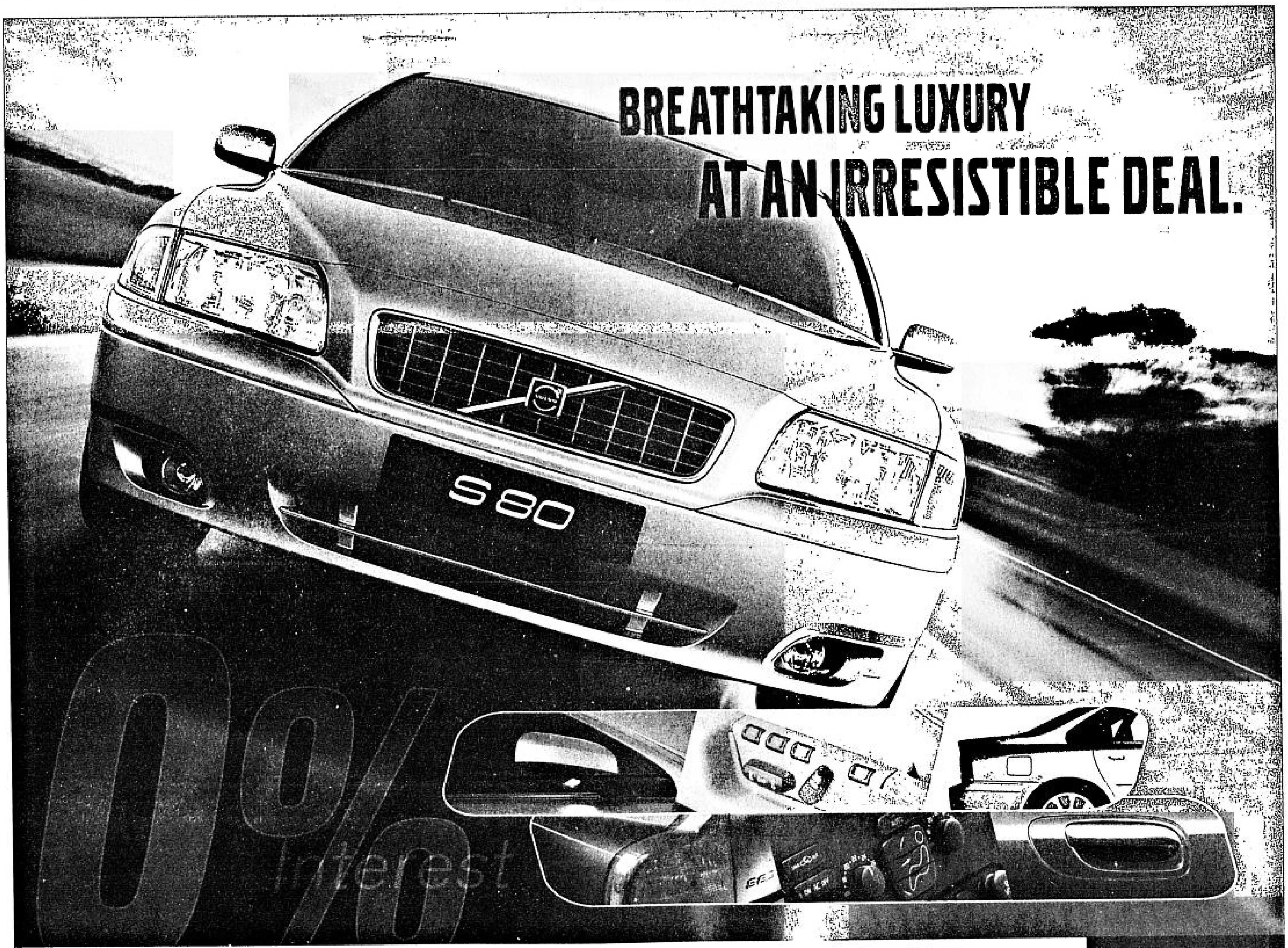

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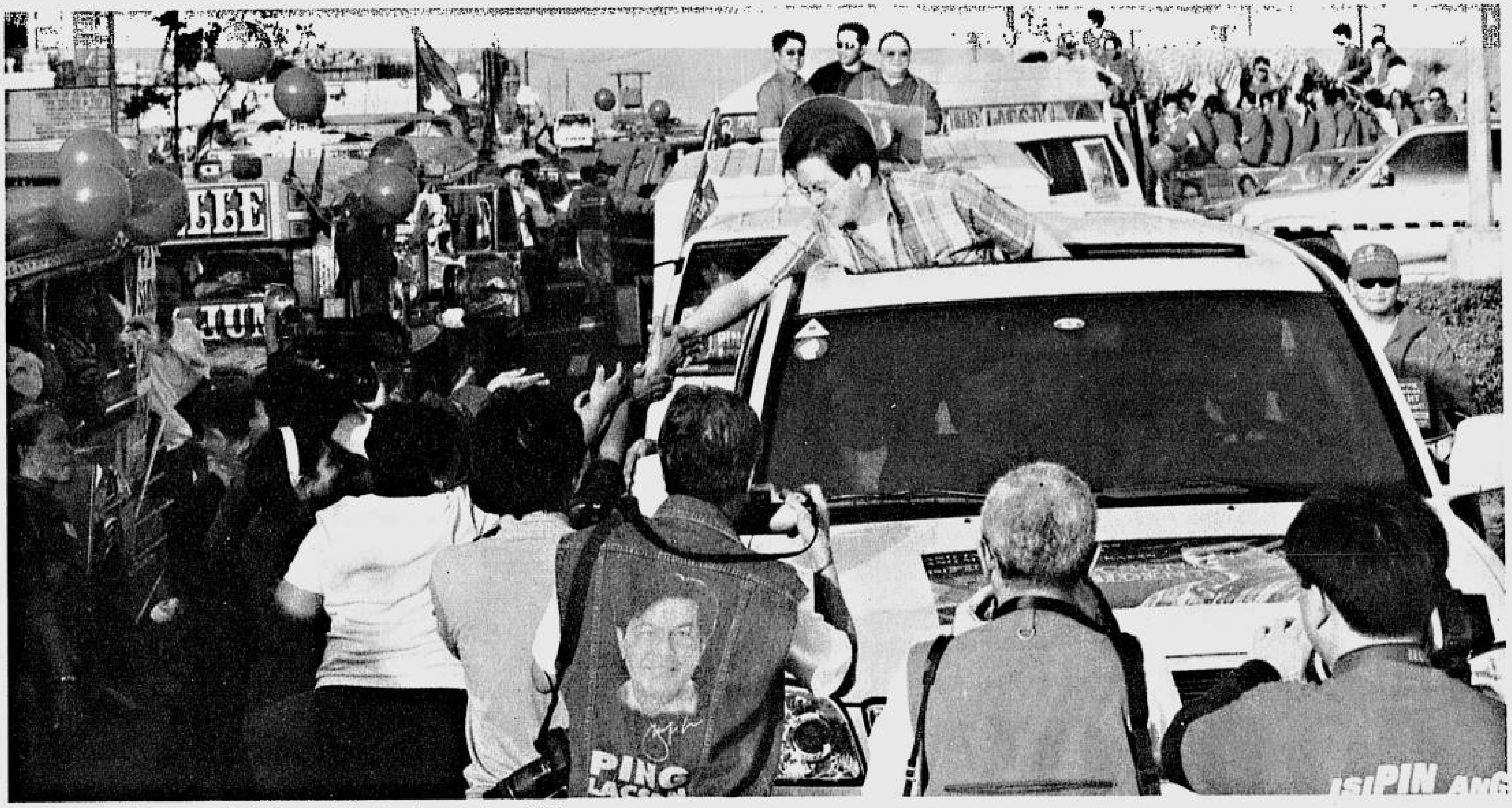
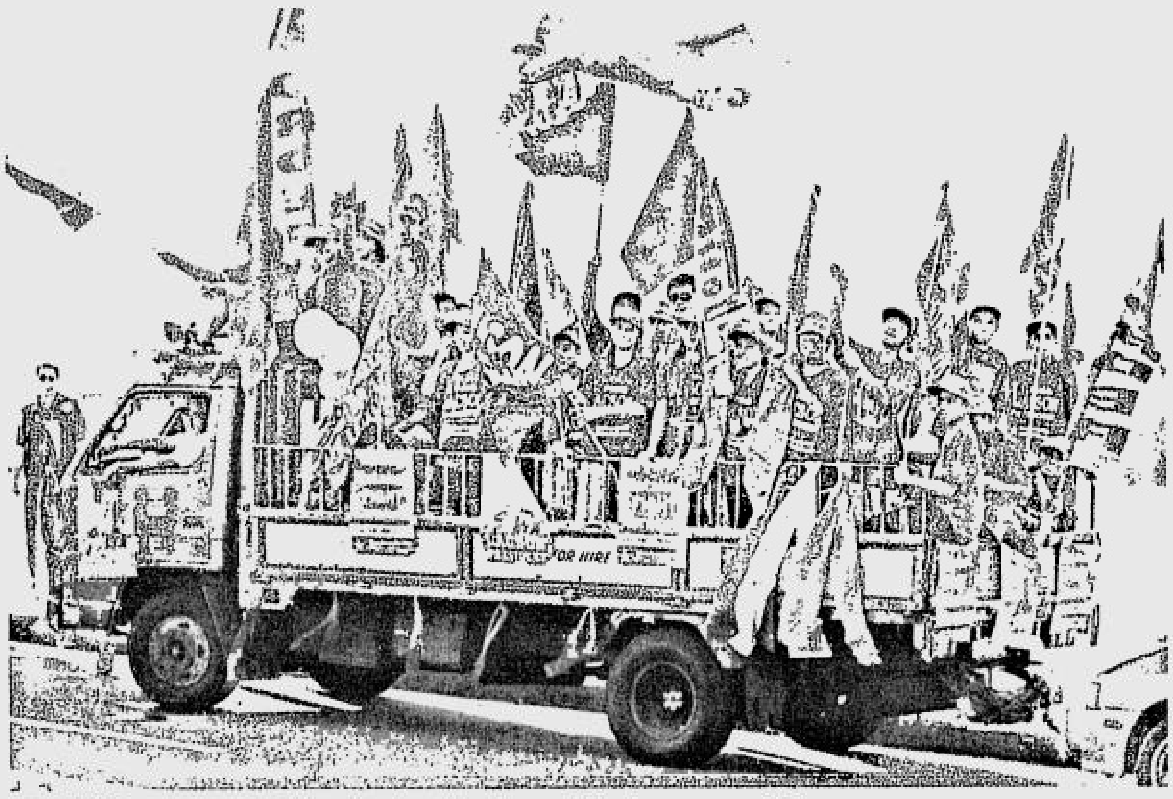


WILL Lacson on his Lexus get a honk of appreciation from the motoring public?

The courteous convoy wins the 'motor vote'



STANDING on open top vehicle, though exhilirating, could be dangerous on highways.

From page C1

but more so the campaign drivers, other motorists, many pedestrians and the vehicles themselves.

Indeed, traffic safety can be lost in the frenzy of campaigning. Though there is no available data on traffic-related accidents caused by election campaign convoys, there have been enough word-of-mouth accounts of serious (if not embarrassing) multiple collisions involving vehicles in a convoy.

Tuesday, Feb. 10, was the red-letter day for candidates running for president, senator and representative.

Motor savvy

For these candidates, the ability to be "motor savvy" on the road is as important as the ability to be motor mouths at the podium. If mobility is power, then the motorcade is the ultimate show of force on the campaign trail. The longer the convoy, the greater your chances of being noticed, pondered upon and considered for the position by the public.

But there is the show of force that is awesome and inspiring, and another that can be irritating and dangerous—and the line between the two is thin. Counter-flowing, for instance, is not only viewed as bad form, it is dangerous for pedestrians.

Observing traffic rules

Many motorists believe the way a candidate's campaign convoy handles traffic is a good measure of a candidate's respect for the public's rights. Land Transportation Office traffic safety education chief Daisy Jacobo says observing traffic rules is the litmus test for a candidate's propensity for the kind of governance that he or she is capable of.

"If you can't follow simple traffic laws, then what more can we expect of your accountability to the people?" she asks.

So, if you want to get a honk of appreciation from the motoring public, Jacobo advises candidates on the road to follow common sense, common courtesy and the letter of the law. Here are some of her advice:

- Candidates should not cover directional and other highway signs with their own posters. Locate their campaign posters or billboards in such a way that this would not block traffic and directional signs. Better yet, follow the guidelines set by the Comelec in putting up posters, streamers and billboards.
- There were also cases of excessive campaign materials on vehicles that obscure the vision of the driver, according to automotive technologist Alex P. Loinaz.
- Convoys do not give the vehicle drivers the right to drive recklessly. One vehicle driven dangerously is bad enough. Imagine 20 reckless vehicle drivers terrorizing the streets.
- Other causes of convoy-related accidents include overloading, overdecorated vehicles, poorly secured campaign materials, megaphones and heavy objects that fall. There are also overly lighted vehicles causing unnecessary glare to oncoming and following vehicles.
- Avoid tailgating. If you're scared of being left behind in the convoy, you should be prepared by knowing the itinerary of the group, or having a map of your next destination. If every vehicle in the convoy follows each other too closely, one collision can result in an accordion-like accident.
- Excessive use of sirens means a dip in approval ratings. Besides being irritating to other motorists, the law clearly states that sirens and blinkers are to be used only for emergency vehicles. Clearly a candidate running late for a speaking engagement who uses a siren to get his way in traffic and not in an emergency situation, adopts a power-tripping mode at the expense of the driving public's space. Jacobo's advice: campaign sorties should be planned ahead so that campaign planners don't have to resort to strong-horn tactics or pressure their drivers to exceed the speed limits prescribed by the law.
- Causes of the campaign convoy-related accidents in the past included operation of two-way radios, cellphones and similar devices that distract the driver.
- Government vehicles are for official use, not for campaign use. For incumbents seeking another term, they should be reminded that government vehicles should not be used for campaigning. Jacobo says it is not only a lawful consideration but morally appropriate as well.
- Don't be slave drivers to your drivers. If a candidate is tired from all that hand-waving and shaking, imagine how much more pooped out the drivers are. Vehicles that are forced to run the extra mile without being maintained as scheduled are as prone to breakdowns, which, in the home stretch, would be detrimental to the candidate. A candidate, Jacobo stresses, must also learn to think of his or her campaign members more than what he or she will say or do in the next town. Remember, running the country is much like running the convoy—every member must stay in line, be healthy, must follow laws and do their roles to keep the motor running.

"Other common causes of accidents included driving under the influence of alcohol due to numerous banquets, fiestas and celebrations honoring the candidates and their entourage," said Loinaz.

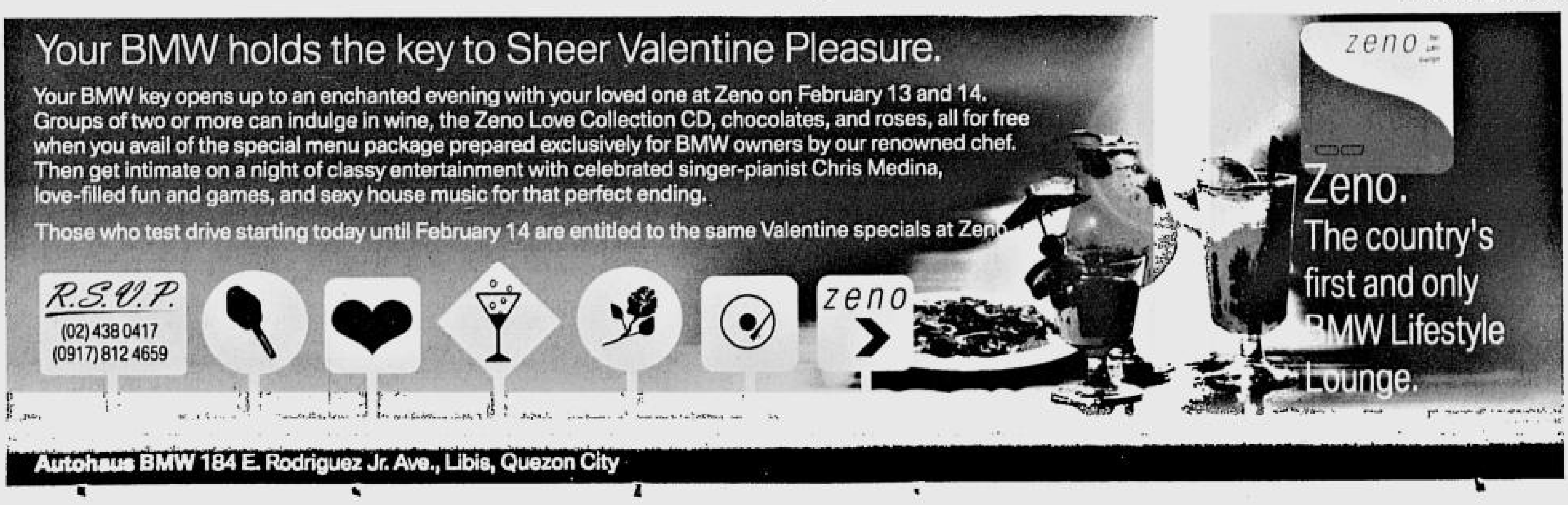
And it's all not just about people, too. Vehicles must also be rotated so there will be free days for vehicles to be inspected and checked. For candidates fond of acronyms, here's a useful one: Blowbaga. It is the pretrip inspection to-do shortlist: battery, light, oil, water, brake, air (tires), gas and accessories (including the early warning device, tools and spare fan belts and spare lights for long trips).

> The way a candidate's campaign convoy handles traffic is a good measure of a candidate's respect for the public's rights

- Wear your seatbelts. Even in a convoy, you can still be apprehended for not wearing seatbelts. It's the law, and there are no exemptions to that.
- Those who want to stand on pickups or on any open-top vehicle are advised to do so only during the day. Standing on pickups, though exhilarating, is especially dangerous on highways. Jacobo says it is relatively safer on municipal and secondary roads where only lower speeds are possible.
- Of course, it's the votes that count, not the number of people a candidate can pack in one vehicle. So, for the entourage's safety and comfort, avoid overloading.
- Vehicle papers are still required. If you notice policemen flagging down vehicles without license plates lately, expect these officers to continue the operations, elections or no elections.
- Time your road trips to avoid rush hours. Candidates and their campaign planners should be more conscious of practicing road ethics. That includes making sure the convoy does not obstruct traffic during rush hour when everybody doesn't care for anything, except for being home.
- Getting assistance from mobile traffic enforcers should provide your convoy with all the advance traffic warning measures you need. They're the authorized persons who can use the siren and set the safe pace for your team.

It pays to be safe in convoys, Jacobo adds. Candidates wouldn't want the negative publicity associated with hit-and-runs and vehicle collisions in a campaign sortie.

And it's more than just publicity. In the end, motorists will remember which candidate gave them a hard time on the road. They will remember which candidate made them late for their own appointment, and which candidate almost wrecked their hard-earned cars because of the convoy's reckless ways. Beyond the handshakes and the winsome smiles, the way a candidate runs the convoy is a mirror image of the way he would most likely run the country.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RP welcomes India's top motorcycle brand

By Charles E. Buban

HERE in the Philippines, the name Bajaj may not ring a bell.

But that will soon change as India's largest two- and three-wheeler manufacturer and the world's largest three-wheeler manufacturer has finally entered our market.

With an 83 percent growth in total exports last year, the Philippines becomes Bajaj Auto Limited's latest addition to its distribution network that covers 50 countries in Asia, Europe, Africa and South and Central America.

What's interesting is that one Japanese motorcycle maker is in fact celebrating the arrival here.

Sole distributor

"Our appointment as the sole distributor of Bajaj motorcycles in the Philippines further strengthens our presence in the (local) market," said Michio Yamaguchi, president of Kawasaki Motors Philippines Corp.

The joint venture is a step forward in strengthening the alliance that first began in 1984 with the technical collaboration agreement between BAL and Kawasaki Heavy Industries of Japan to produce a range of the latest state-of-art two-wheelers in India.

Since the tie-up, Bajaj Auto has launched KB100, KB RTZ, KB125, 4S, 4S Champion, Boxer, Caliber, Caliber115, Wind125 and India's first real cruiser bike, the Kawasaki Bajaj Eliminator.

3-M Kawasaki-Bajaj bikes

"This successful collaboration that produced over 3 million Kawasaki-Bajaj motorbikes is what KMPC and BAL aim to replicate here in the Philippines in the coming months and years," said Yamaguchi.

Three 4-stroke solo-ride models will be initially available in the market: Bajaj BYK 100, Bajaj Caliber 115 and Bajaj Wind 125.

"These models will give other manufacturers' mopeds and solo-ride models a run for their money as these three packs durable and reliable engine, fresh styling and dependable performance," said Rodel Pablo, KMPC general manager.

KAWASAKI BYK 100

100 km/L

The Bajaj BYK 100 (P34,000) created a reputation in India as a fuel-efficient bike when it reported to have achieved a mileage of 100 kilometers per liter.

The company said this higher mileage is due to BYK's bypass switch-valve system incorporated in the pilot circuit of the carburetor.

Its other features include giving its rider a well-balanced riding posture, multifocal reflector headlamps, direction blinkers, telescopic front suspension, five-step adjustable rear suspension add to riding comfort and excellent maneuverability in heavy traffic or difficult roads.

Kawasaki platform

Developed under the Kawasaki platform, the Caliber 115 (P48,000) features a dazzling Optoprism headlamp with stylish fairing.

Its contoured 14-liter fuel tank with attractive decals and an aluminum diecasting will surely attract attention and its throttle responsive ignition control system (TRICS) ensures the K-TEC engine gives a good mileage at all times.

A sporty signature silencer with Kawasaki-etched protection shield accentuates the esthetics of the bike.

The attractive speedometer console has a sports watch look.

A new beginning

The Wind 125 (P54,000) marks a new beginning for Bajaj's bike exports. Kawasaki has made the Wind 125 an exclusive world bike to be made by Bajaj in India for the domestic and export markets.

Apart from the Philippines, the model is now being exported to countries such as Thailand, Brazil and Argentina.

The Wind is also BAL's first attempt at a four-stroke 125-cc bike after its once popular two-stroke KB125 was discontinued.

Positioned between the 100-cc commuter and the high-powered 150-cc plus segments, the Wind 125 offers the advantages of both these two extremes.

Kick-start mechanism

The differentiating features on the Wind 125 include a primary kick-start mechanism that allows the rider to start the bike even when any of the gear is engaged. This could be a plus point if your bike stalls in the middle of the road.

The Wind 125 features a digital ignition system, a five-speed synchronized gearbox, a silent timing chain for lowering engine noise and a constant velocity carburetor for better throttle response.

Safety and comfort add-ons in the Wind 125 are a longer stroke HydroDynamic suspension, with the rear, five-step adjustable type suspension.

Indeed, with these three bikes in the market, the country's solo-ride market will have new and perhaps, better options to choose from.

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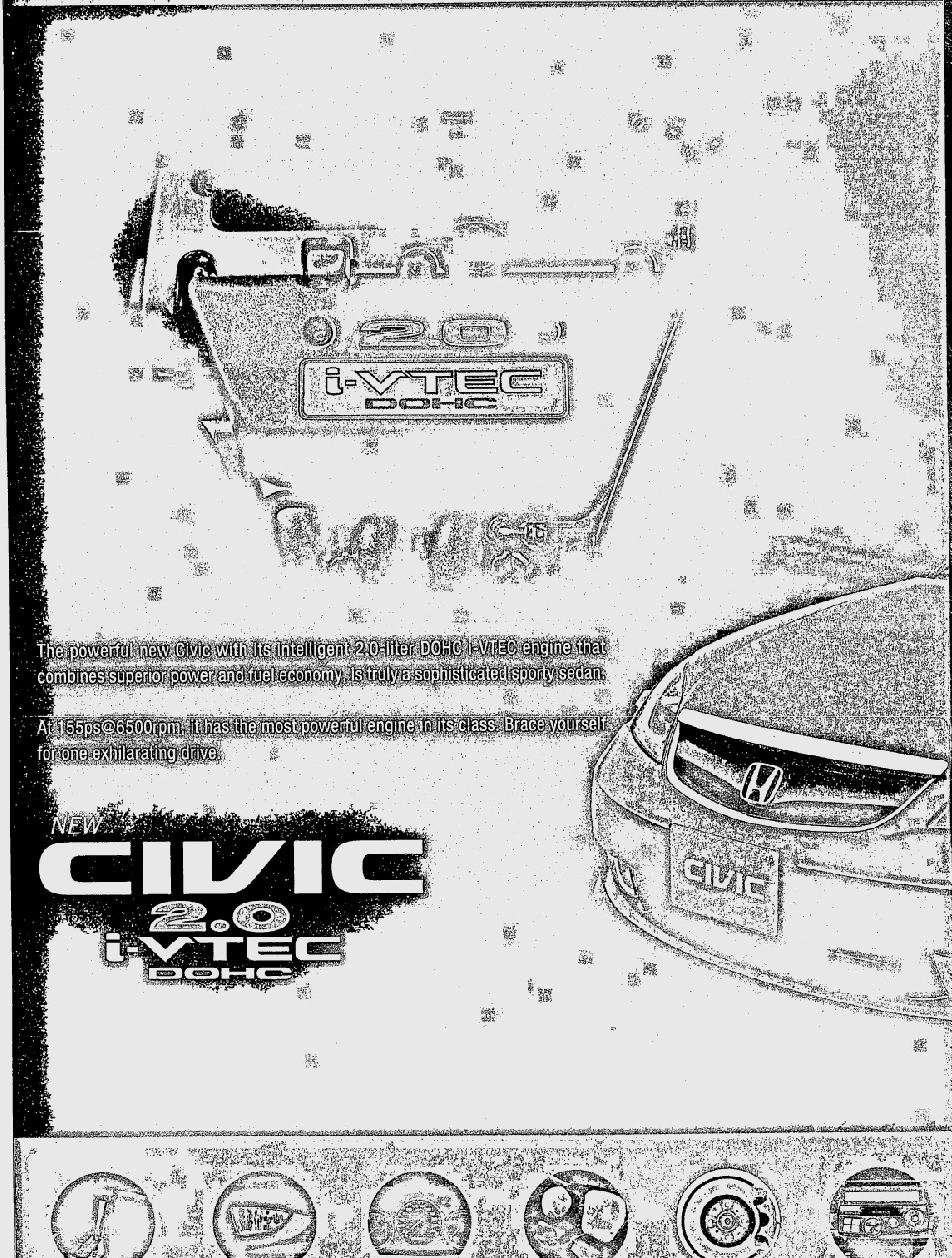

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Mitsubishi scores big win in Dakar

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

I DOFF my hat to Mitsubishi Motors. Just very recently, it won a record-breaking fourth consecutive victory in the Telefonica Dakar Rally. It was also Mitsubishi's ninth overall triumph since it first entered the event in 1983. Winning it for Mitsubishi were Stephane Peterhansel and Jean-Paul Cottret.

For the record, Peterhansel became only the second person in history, after Hubert Auriol, to win the event on both two and four wheels. The Frenchman had also won the rally six times on a motorbike.

"On the liaison section this morning I couldn't help but think about last year," said Peterhansel, who lost a potential victory in the penultimate stage of the 2003 event. "It has been a long time to wait one year for this victory. There were many times when it was easy to make a mistake. I spoke with Jean-Paul when we crossed the finish line of the special today and thanked him for a great job. I am happy for him. It's his first Dakar win."

* * *

Peterhansel had fond memories, too, of his victory on a motorbike.

"For the first win with the bike I had to wait four years," he said. "For the first win with the car it took me six."

Peterhansel joined fellow Mitsubishi legend Hubert Auriol as one of only two winners in two different categories.

"It is a completely different feeling," said Peterhansel. "Hiroshi drove a perfect race as well, but it was my turn this time!"

* * *

Mitsubishi Pajero/Montero Evolution teammates Hiroshi Masuoka and Gilles Picard claimed an emphatic one-two finish for Mitsubishi Motors Motor Sports, making it the eighth year Mitsubishi Motors has filled at least the top two winning positions on the Dakar Rally (1985, 1992, 1997, 1998, 2001,2002, 2003 and 2004).

Masuoka, the winner in 2002 and 2003, finished 49 minutes and 24 seconds adrift of his teammate.

"I am very pleased for Stéphane and for Mitsubishi," said Masuoka. "I drove a good race. It was not easy. Mauritania was difficult. Next year I will push for my third win."

Co-driver Gilles Picard was delighted with his second position.

"I am happy to be here," Picard said. "It has been a great team performance. I just wish sometimes that the media would not just highlight the role of the co-driver when we make a small mistake. I know that we are here to be in the shadow of the driver, but it is never easy to finish the Dakar."

Of course. Dakar is one of the world's toughest car races. In fact, it can be considered the most difficult ever. Some racers have died in the past due to the rally's treacherous roads.

* * *

MITSUBISHI wins in Dakar 2004

Andrea Mayer and double Dakar Rally winning co-driver Andreas Schulz have fulfilled their support role superbly, the German pair arriving in Dakar in a fine fifth position in the team's official Pajero/Montero.

"It is a different feeling to finish this race as a member of an official team," said Mayer. "On a bike you are alone. When I crossed the finish line today I knew it had been a great team effort. Andreas has been fantastic. I know he is used to challenging for the win, but he has been crucial to my result. I know I still have things to learn, but Andy, the mechanics and all the team have supported me to Dakar and I thank them with this fifth place."

Said Mitsubishi Motorsport head Sven Quandt: "It is a great victory and the whole team worked very hard for it. I am happy that we made it one, two and five. I think it was fair for Stéphane to win this time. He deserves to be very happy and proud of himself today. Andrea had a very good result, perhaps better than we expected. She drove in a very professional manner. It was one of the toughest Dakars that I have seen, which is good for Mitsubishi because we have shown that we can win the hardest of all the rallies."

"My feeling is strange," said Team Director Dominique Serieys. "Everybody in the team has done a good job. We could not win this rally if the tip of the iceberg was not functioning, and the mechanics and drivers of the trucks can be proud of themselves. It may have looked easy from the outside, but we had our fair share of problems to overcome."

Emotions overwhelmed Serieys, saying: "This is a great win for Mitsubishi, but it is also a human win—a great day for Stéphane. It was the same when Hiroshi lost in 2001 and he won the following year. It has been a long 12 months for Stéphane. I feel really emotional as well for Jean-Paul and Andrea. She drove a great rally. She was always smiling and never complaining."

The Top 10

Driver/Co-driver; Car; Time Difference

1 Stéphane Peterhansel/Jean-Paul Cottret; Mitsubishi Pajero/Montero Evolution; 53.47.37
2 Hiroshi Masuoka/Gilles Picard; Mitsubishi Pajero/Montero Evolution; 54.37.01 + 49.24
3 Jean-Louis Schlesser/Jean-Marie Lurquin Schlesser; Ford Raid; 56.48.10 + 3.00.33
4 Luc Alphand/Henri Magne; BMW X5; 57.43.35 + 3.55.58
5 Andrea Mayer/Andreas Schulz; Mitsubishi Pajero/Montero; 59.33.54 + 5.46.17
6 Bruno Saby/Matthew Stevenson; Volkswagen Touareg; 60.41.40 + 6.54.03
7 Giniel de Villiers/François Jordan; Nissan Pickup; 61.53.48 + 8.06.11
8 Grégoire de Mevius/Alain Guehennec; BMW X5; 63.22.22 +9.34.45
9 Thierry Magnaldi/Didier Legal; Buggy Honda; 63.48.13 + 10.00.36
10 Nasser-Saleh Al-Attiyah/Marc Bartholome; Mitsubishi Pajero/Montero; 63.49.05 + 10.01.28

* * *

HYUNDAI TREAT. Hyundai's five models—XG, Sonata, Coupè, Matrix and Starex—had their so-called exposure trips last week at the Fort Bonifacio Global City in Taguig. And what a treat! All five Hyundai babes passed the tests with high marks. Here's a glass to Hari (Hyundai Asia Resources Inc.) for a job well done.

HONDA HYPE. The new Honda Civic was shown to the media on Monday at the Manila Polo Club. It was such a big hit that Arnel Doria and his Angels led by Tin Tin Reyes and Min Magbal were trying to outrace each other extending a red wine party to everyone willing to listen that evening. Here's to you, guy and dolls, for another successful Honda event.

* * *

QUOTE ME. For a change, make your car your Valentine date on Saturday. Give it a car and engine wash.

PROLOGUE Clermont-Ferrand

Ford awards P2-M grant to environment advocates

FORD Group Philippines has awarded five recipients with almost P2 million in grants under the 2003 Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants Program. The grants money will be divided among the different projects in the areas of natural environment, heritage and child and youth.

The five grantees and their projects are Center for Environmental Awareness and Education ("Environmental Education Training and National Conference"), Maguindanoan Development Foundation Inc. ("Advocacy for the Conservation and Management of the Ligawasan Marsh"), Children for Breastfeeding ("Mobilizing Children for Earth Friendly Parenting"), Institute of Social Order ("Coral Reef Champions") and Bantay Kalikasan ("Establishment of Scientific Garden in the La Mesa Biodiversity and Nature Park").

The Center for Environmental Awareness and Education and its Environmental Education Training and National Conference project will receive a total of P493,000 in grants fund. The CEAE has been a recipient of the Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants program for three years. For 2004, it would like to continue in its mission of making environmental education available to every educator and student in the Philippines through the conference.

Conserving and managing the Ligawasan Marsh earned for the Maguindanoan Development Foundation Inc. a P350,000 grant. In 2002, the MDFI received a grant for developing IEC materials for the advocacy project. It is continuing its effort to conserve the marsh as a premier wetland in the country by conducting various trainings and workshops.

Another recipient is the Children for Breastfeeding group, which received a P300,000 grant for its project to promote sound traditional and environment-friendly ways of nurturing kids via the revival of a breastfeeding culture and the use of baby slings.

A P500,000 grant was awarded to the ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Kalikasan for its project to establish a scientific garden at the La Mesa Biodiversity and Nature Park. The garden will be developed in the La Mesa Forest for educational purposes and will serve as a gene bank.

Rounding up the list of grantees is the Institute of Social Order's "Coral Reef Champions" project which aims to promote coral reef protection among various organizations and individuals through information, education and communication campaigns in Camarines Norte and Panukulan.

Choices keep getting better with a Civic 2-liter

HONDA Civic aficionados have more toys to play—and more bragging rights to boot—now that the 2004 Civic arrived in the country with two choices of engine blocks.

A more dramatic improvement in power and torque is expected on the Civic 2.0-li DOHC i-VTEC. The maximum power of 155 horsepower at 6,500 rpm and torque range of 18.0 kg m at 5,000 rpm make it the most powerful in its class.

The engine is mated to a 5-speed automatic transmission—a first in its class, stressed Honda Cars Philippines Inc. in a Feb. 9 press presentation.

Its transmission is equipped with Grade Logic Control system, realizing smooth shifting and responsive performance to match a wide variety of driving conditions. A steering assistance depending on vehicle speed Electric Power Steering (EPS) enhances a more relaxed driving feel.

The VTi and VTi-S variants house a 1.6-1i VTEC-3 engine that produces 130 ps at 6,600 rpm. Excellent fuel economy without sacrificing power that is offered in all the Civic variants.

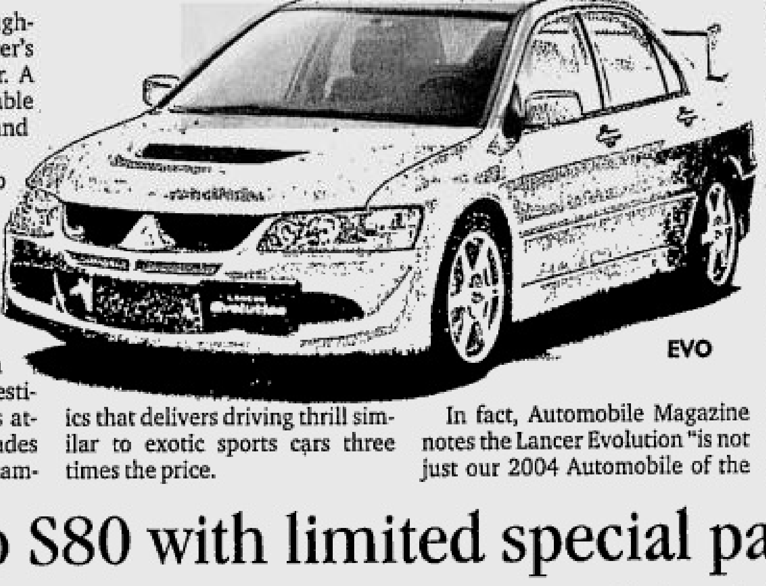
The new Civic has newly designed front grille, fog lamps and smoked headlights for sporty but elegant styling. High contrast smoked multireflector tail lamp and rear skirt extensions add to its progressive look while its newly designed 15-inch new alloy wheel is both stylish and functional.

The new Civic's ergonomically designed cockpit has large three-dial luminous meter cluster, leather-bound steering wheel and an MP3/Windows Media Audio-capable 2-din stereo system. It has stylish black interior color complemented by the luxury of supple black leather upholstery. A cabin interior is designed for extremely low noise and vibration.

For the tech buff, Civic's chassis design includes Front Toe Control Link Strut suspension with stabilizer and Double Wishbone Suspension with rear stabilizer for an improved handling response.

Honda's G-CON technology vie for the world's highest collision safety standards, dual Supplemental Restraint System (SRS) as well as pedestrian-protecting design that augment the car's excellent overall safety performance. Antilock Braking, System (ABS) and Electronic Brake Force Distribution System (EDB) were also installed in the 2.0 I-VTEC and 1.6 VTI-S variants.

Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution: Automobile Magazine's 2004 automobile of the year



EVO

AN AUTOMOTIVE thoroughbred. An enthusiast driver's dream. A street legal racecar. A rally racing champ. Affordable and fun. An everyday sedan and supercar.

Now add another label to the Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution: "2004 Automobile of the Year."

In its January 2004 issue, Automobile Magazine—an automotive enthusiast magazine published in the US—bestows its most prestigious honor to a car that has attracted wide–ranging accolades for superb performance dynamics that delivers driving thrill similar to exotic sports cars three times the price.

In fact, Automobile Magazine notes the Lancer Evolution "is not just our 2004 Automobile of the Year, but also very likely the automotive icon of the decade."

Developed through the years of rally racing, the Lancer Evolution exudes performance for one simple reason: that's what it was built for.

The Evolution distributes 271 horsepower and 273 pound feet of torque to all four wheels, thanks to its turbo charged four cylinder engine and all-wheel-drive system.

Brembo disc brake and Sports ABS provide control over the lightweight 17-inch wheels, which are wrapped in Yokohama performance tires.

2004 Volvo S80 with limited special pay easy plan

VOLVO S80

OWNING a Volvo can never be this easy.

Viking Cars Inc. gives aspiring owners a chance to get behind the wheel of the 2004 Volvo S80 by offering a zero-percent interest, 50-percent down payment, 24 months to pay special pay easy plan to new Volvo S80 buyers.

A combination of luxury, power, sense, style and safety produces one undoubtedly world-class car. Aside from its powerful 5-cylinder Light Pressure Turbo engine that drives effortlessly at 180 bhp and accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in 9.1 seconds, it offers superb sound experience with its optional dynaudio speakers.

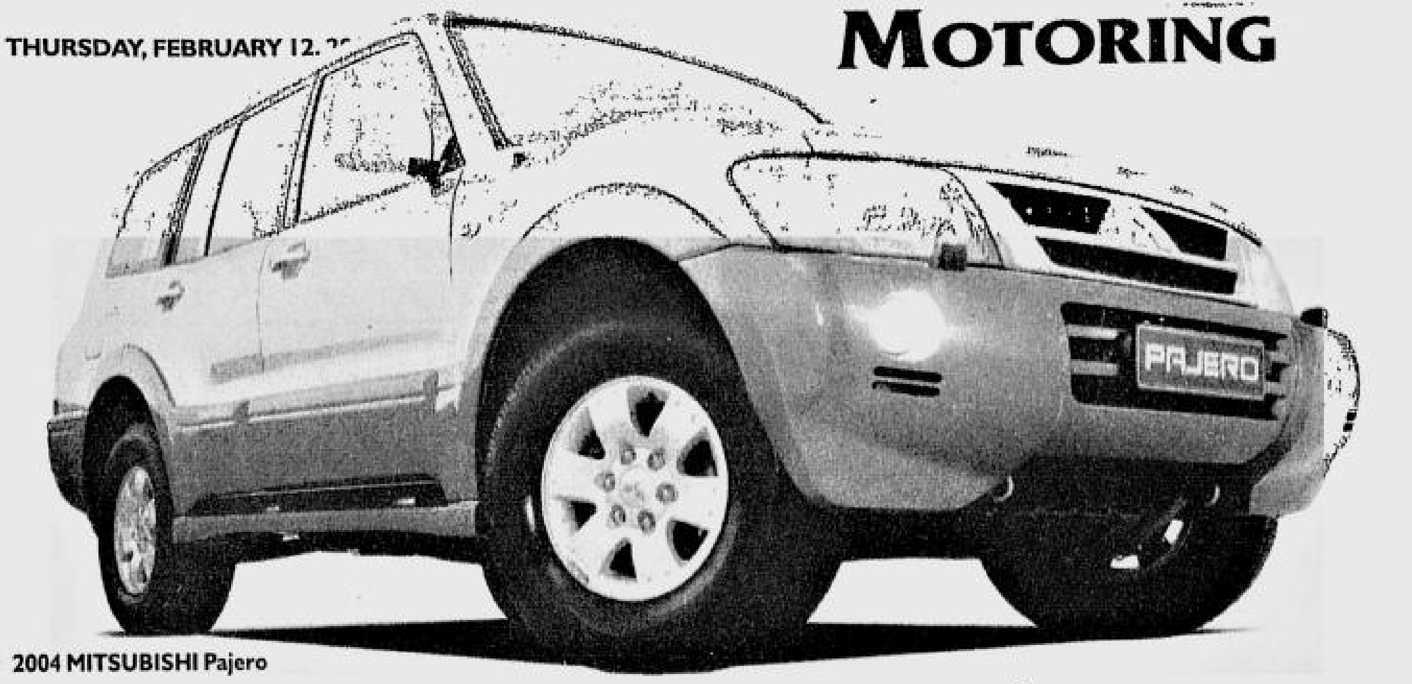
New and innovative additions deliver a more dynamic and exhilarating feel to the new Volvo S80. These include the eye-catching egg-crate grille, exciting front and rear designs and smart instrumentation panels. Adding to the relaxing and comfortable ride is the peace of mind knowing that you and your loved ones are always safe in a Volvo.

Discover how the new Volvo S80 redefines luxury. Avail of the S80 special pay easy plan until March 30.

In Manila, Viking Cars is the official distributor of Volvo cars. The Volvo Makati office, showroom and aftersales service center are located at 2272 Chino Roces Ave., Makati City, while Volvo Ortigas Center is located at 88 ADB Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

The 2004 Volvo automobile line includes the sporty S60, the flagship S80 luxury sedan, the versatile V70 wagon and rugged Cross Country, the compact S40 and V40 models and the all-new XC90 AWD. For details and inquiries, please call 893-6621 to 22 (Makati showroom) or 637-0414 to 17 (Ortigas showroom).

The promo is not valid in conjunction with other ongoing promos.



2004 MITSUBISHI Pajero

2004 PAJERO: Vast cargo space even with the 2nd row seats in place

MORE luxury and more conveniences inside

The powerful new 4WD Pajero

THE MITSUBISHI Pajero is credited with popularizing the SUV in the Philippines after it first showed up in the gray market in the early 1980s as the imported Montero. While the Range Rover and Toyota Land Cruiser preceded the Pajero, they somehow never caught on like the Pajero. When Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. added the Pajero to its available product line, it quickly became the vehicle of choice for the upscale and upper class who preferred the Pajero's sporty image to that of the staid Mercedes.

The Pajero's standing as a luxurious but durable 4WD SUV was established when it won first place in the 1982 Paris-Dakar Rally, the toughest off-road endurance race in the world, and went on to win year after year. Despite some grumbling about its underpowered diesel engine and uncomfortable ride in the back, the Pajero continued to lord it over rivals as the country's most popular SUV. Until the Ford Expedition came along, that is. The Expedition, fitted with a V8 engine and providing better ride quality, grabbed market share from the Pajero despite its much higher price and gas-guzzling reputation.

Upgraded

Now MMPC is fighting back with a bigger, more powerful, more comfortable, shapelier and better-equipped

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

4WD Pajero in both diesel and gasoline CBU (from Japan) variants. The powerplant of the new diesel Pajero has been upgraded from the 2.8-liter, single overhead cam, intercooled turbocharged engine with rotary-type fuel injection system of the Fieldmaster model to a 3.2-liter, 16-valve, twin-cam engine with electronic direct diesel injection system, boosting peak horsepower from 125 PS/4,000 rpm and 29.8 kg-m/2,000 rpm max torque in the diesel Fieldmaster to 165 PS/3,800 rpm and 38.1 kg-m/2,000 rpm, respectively, in the new diesel Pajero.

Even more exciting for the power-hungry is the new gasoline Pajero that has a 3.8-liter, 24-valve SOHC V6 engine with ECI-Multipoint fuel injection delivering 215 PS/5,000 max horsepower and 34.4 kg-m/3,750 rpm max torque. This is the first time that Mitsubishi is selling the gasoline Pajero in this country, thanks to the new law that bases the excise tax on market value instead of engine displacement, fuel type and seating capacity. Regarding seating capacity, the all-new Pajero, whether diesel or gas, has a front-facing third row seat that can be folded under the floor or removed, thereby increasing cargo space even when the second row seat is not folded and tumbled. The detachable third-row seat replaces the clumsy bench seats facing each other in the previous model.

Invecs, too

Another new Pajero feature that will please the power-hungry is the Invecs-II 5-speed Sportronic automatic transmission (AT) with manual shift gate that replaces the old 4-speed AT and allows the driver to shift gears semi-manually for sportier acceleration. Off-road enthusiasts, on the other hand, will be delighted with the M-ASTC (Mitsubishi Active Stability Traction Control) 4WD system that is standard in both the diesel and gas variants of the new Pajero. Active-Trac 4WD can be used both on and off-road and when the terrain gets rougher, the driver can easily shift to 4HLc or 4LLc to lock the center differential for added traction and low-range gearing.

When I drove the new Pajero every day for a week, I noticed that the all-wheel independent suspension system had greatly improved the ride—even when a friend took the wheel and I sat in the back. Since the new Pajero is longer, wider and has a bigger wheelbase plus a 4x4 transfer case, inevitably it is heavier than the outgoing 2WD model. The increased heft somewhat hinders snappy acceleration despite the additional horsepower, but the gasoline Pajero on loan to me still zoomed to a respectable 160 km/h on the Skyway.

More safety features

I also appreciated the fact that the new Pajero has more safety and luxe features. Instead of only one airbag, there are two airbags and the 4-wheel disc brakes now have ABS with EBD. The headlamp washers, tire pressure monitoring system, leather seats and woodgrain finish on the dash have been retained but instead of only six ways the driver's seat is now electronically adjustable eight ways, rear air-conditioning is now fully automatic, the side mirrors can be electronically folded and wood trim has been added to the leather-wrapped steering wheel and gearshift knob.

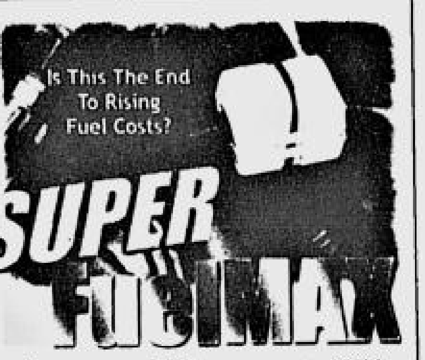
All these engineering, safety and cosmetic improvements, of course, don't come free, so the new diesel Pajero is priced at P2.4 million while the gasoline variant is sold for P2.3 million, or some P700,000 more than the old model. But if you ask me, the price difference is well worth it and gives value for money.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Beauty is in the eye of the beer holder.

* * *

(E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@yahoo.com.)



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Jaguar XJ6 wins luxury car category at What Car? car of the year awards

JAGUAR XJ6

JAGUAR has just collected two awards, most recently winning the Luxury Car category with the Jaguar XJ6 at the prestigious What Car? Car of the Year Awards.

Rob Aherne, editor of What Car? magazine, commented: "The new Jaguar XJ6 is our pick of the luxury car class. Visually, it's unmistakably a Jaguar, with an interior that is a brilliant contemporary take on a classic design. Under the skin however, it's all change with an ultramodern aluminum structure that brings a host of benefits including excellent performance, fuel economy and emissions from the 3.0-liter V6 engine."

Aherne continued: "The new XJ is also bigger in every direction than the previous generation, so there is plenty of room to stretch out in the front and in the rear. The increase in size though, hasn't diluted the traditional Jaguar dynamic ability—the XJ6 is surprisingly nimble and boasts excellent body control."

A delighted Phil Popham, Jaguar's UK managing director, said: "We are delighted with the reaction the new XJ has received from the media and our customers since its launch in the middle of last year. In the UK the new XJ is already dominating the premium luxury saloon segment with 2003 sales up 92 percent compared with 2002."

Earlier, the Jaguar X-Type collected its first award of 2004, winning a gold prize at the Fleet Excellence Awards. It also took top honors in the New Diesel Car of the Year category, voted for by the readers of Fleet Week and Fleet Management magazines. The all-new Jaguar XJ also received a highly commended award in the luxury car category.

The new XJ series was successfully launched in the Philippines last November by Jaguar Cars Inc., exclusive distributor of Jaguar cars in the country.

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Bosch enjoys best image as Germany's auto supplier

BOSCH enjoys the best image as automotive supplier in all of Germany. This is the result of a survey "Image Profiles 2004" commissioned by the Manager Magazine.

The Emnid Institute conducts the poll on behalf of the Hamburg-based publication every two years among German executives, asking for their opinions on Germany's major corporations.

Bosch scored 758 from a maximum of 1,000 points in the sector "automotive suppliers," thus taking first position for the seventh time since the "Image Profiles" study was started. The following positions were taken by Michelin, Siemens VDO and Continental.

Franz Fehrenbach, chair of the board of management, received the coveted award in a presentation ceremony in Hamburg. In his words, the award presents a recognition of the great innovative strength of Bosch, which is reflected in more than 2,000 patents per year.

Fehrenbach also attributes the good image to the fact that Bosch succeeds in combining tradition with modern times: "We know our roots and what has made us strong. It has always been first and foremost in our tradition to be oriented toward the future."

Bosch Rexroth was also able to land a major success. The company based in Lohr, Germany, leaped from a sixth to second rank in the sector "mechanical and plant engineering." The Bosch household appliance company BSH Bosch and Siemens Hausgeräte GmbH kept its position unchanged, holding fifth place in the sector "electrical industry."

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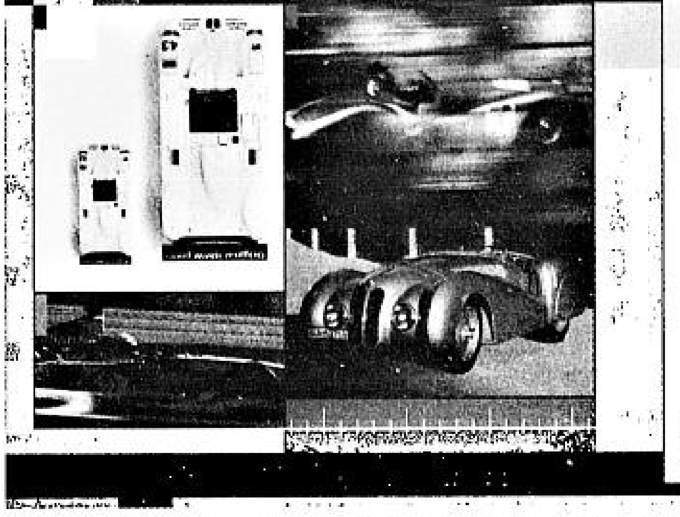

Miniature collectors and motor sports enthusiasts will have the rare chance to review BMW's entire participation in the highly competitive world of motor sports—from F1 to Le Mans, from past to present.

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Those with BMW miniatures (of whatever model, variant, scale or color) can join the ongoing BMW Miniature Transhow Competition and have the chance to win a BMW.Williams F1 FW 25 model. The judging and awarding of winners will be on February 17 at the Zeno Lifestyle Lounge.

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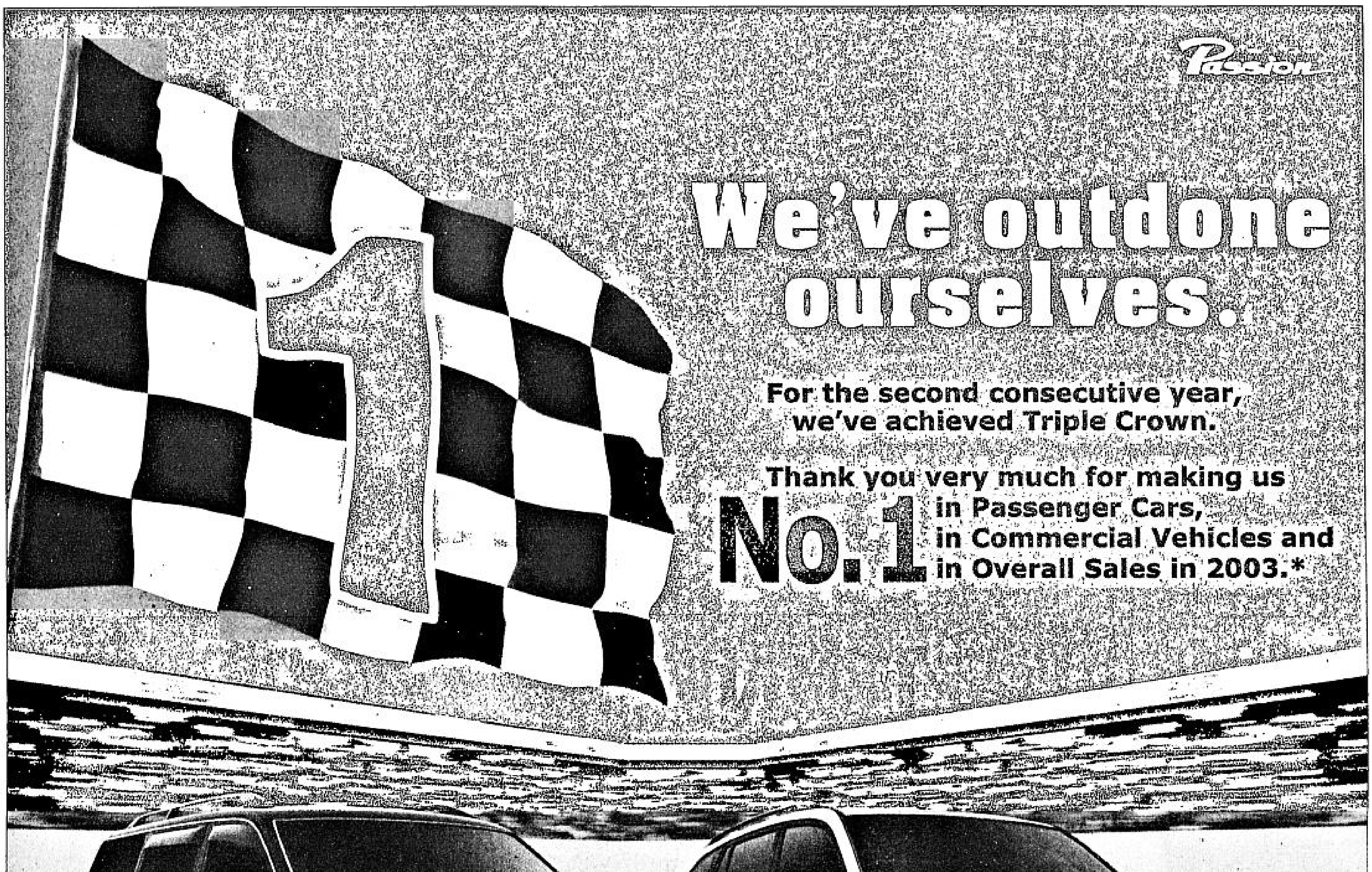
WHAT does steering wheel freeplay mean and how will I know if the steering wheel has the right freeplay?

—Esmer B. Escartin of Bataan

Freeplay is the amount of travel or "give" in your steering wheel before movement of the tires takes place. Check your user's manual for the recommended steering wheel freeplay. With the vehicle stopped and the front wheels pointed straight ahead, rock the steering wheel gently back and forth. If the freeplay is more than specified, take it to the nearest garage for adjustment.

As important as it is, it's not often thought about—but caring for your steering makes sure your vehicle actually goes where you point it! Steering response gets amplified from the steering system to the wheels. With minimal freeplay, the hand-to-road movement becomes very responsive.

At the other end of the scale, worn or damaged steering parts can be very dangerous. If any problems exist with the steering of your car, don't just consider it a minor nuisance. Take it in for immediate adjustment or repair.



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RAV4 4x2 (50%dp)	998,000.00	499,000.00	42,402	29,192	23,191	16,612	13,543	11,527	10,811

* Based on official 2003 CAMPI Vehicle Sales Results
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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

When sugar is sweet and a little sleazy

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Chito Vecina

WARNING: This food story may require parental guidance.

When planning for a sweet temptation for your honey, you may want to rethink that naughty can of whipped cream this Valentine.

If strawberries and champagne are too fancy (and pricey) for your taste, and since oysters' aphrodisiac powers are overrated anyway, you may consider employing a little more imagination when choosing that perfect ending to your romantic evening meal.

Think cake. Kinky cake, that is. Sure, this alternative is no less fattening than the whipped cream, but it's guaranteed to drench your night with laughs—and just might get your honey in the mood for some game of *looove*. So you get your cake, and eat it, too. Where and how you'll be eating it are solely up to your imagination. Just make sure whatever you do will burn the calories from all that icing.

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Kink Cakes owner Tom Carlos is quick to insist, however, that his products are popular because they're "funny, and not obscene." That his business has had considerable success, flourishing into an eight-store corporation in just 14 years in a generally conservative country, is perhaps proof to that.

Putting up an adult-themed cake shop was a bold move, and this 36-year-old businessman was understandably worried about ruffling his parents' conservative feathers. Today, however, with Kink Cakes evolving into a family affair, no one is complaining. And, thankfully for Carlos, no other entrepreneur has had the daring to follow suit.

This month, a dozen Valentine-theme cakes are selling at Kink Cakes branches, with designs ranging from the regular (heart-shaped) to the kinkier (sculptured phallic figures and whatnot icing cake toppers).

Too shy? Fret not; there are regular heart-shaped cookies and chocolates arranged in a flowerpot for you. Put on horse blinders when you step into the cake shop, however.

"We encourage our clients to be creative and give their inputs to the design of their cakes," Carlos says. As a result, the bakeshop catalog has compiled at least a thousand designs to date—and still growing.

Customized

Kink Cakes artists will happily help you interpret your design. So what better way to show your sense of humor than a specially designed dessert for your honey? Personalized orders should be made at least two days before delivery.

"You'll be surprised," Carlos says with a grin, "most of our clients are women."

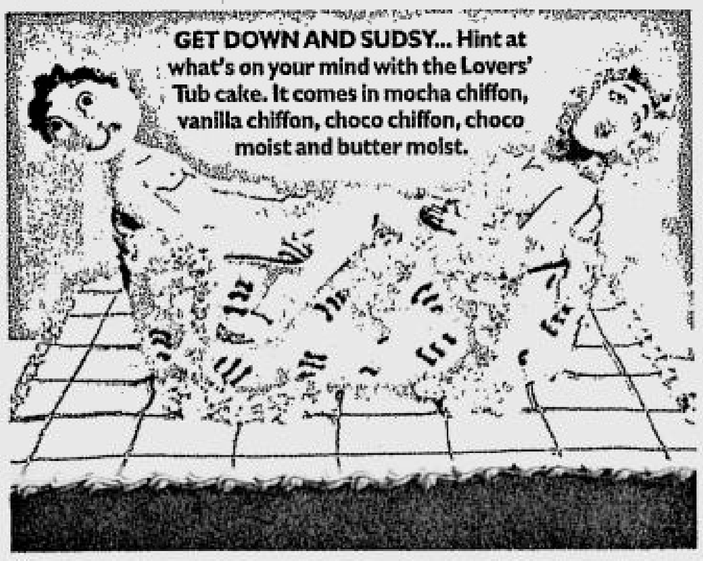
For all occasions, several bestsellers are on display daily, including one like its logo of a curvaceous female torso, the penis of a very well-endowed man, a bootylicious female derriere, a variety of post-silicone surgery size female bosom designs, a tiny man caught in the valley between two be-nippled Everests—playful takes on their recipients' (or givers'), well, shortcomings and fantasies.

Cakes come in five flavors and are incredibly friendly priced: from P150+ for the baby cakes (4"), P250+ for the junior size (6") to only about P600+ to P800+ for the bigger sizes. Soon, the shop will introduce cakes using fondant icing. Getting down and *baaad* with clay-like fondant, of course, may require a greater stretch of the imagination.

Kink Cakes also sells adult novelty items like, hmmm, edible undies, scanty panties shaped into long-stemmed roses, and a sundry of sex toys, and penis- and bosom-shaped items to make their recipi-

WHEN/ D2

GO traditional and romantic with the Butterfly Heart cake—a sweet gesture your honey will truly appreciate. And you get extra points, says Kink Cakes owner Tom Carlos, since his cakes are not cloyingly sweet.



GET DOWN AND SUDSY... Hint at what's on your mind with the Lovers' Tub cake. It comes in mocha chiffon, vanilla chiffon, choco chiffon, choco moist and butter moist.

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FEB 21 4 P.M.	Bouncing with REGINE TOLENTINO Grand Finals
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Sundays 4 P.M.	Stardanz 2004 Elimination Rounds

METROPOLIS star
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FEB 13 5 P.M.	Dream Date With The Stars VALERIE CONCEPCION & DENNIS TRILLO
FEB 14 6 P.M.	Romance With The Stars TOOTSIE GUEVARRA & 8 OM
FEB 22 1 P.M.	Funkids Kiddie Club's 3rd Anniversary
FEB 29 4 P.M.	CARLO AQUINO THEORY BAND Album Tour

M star
LAS PIÑAS

FEB 13 7 P.M.	Irresistible Pre-valentine Treat With The King & Princess Of R & B Music LUKE MEJARES and KYLA with SHERYN REGIS

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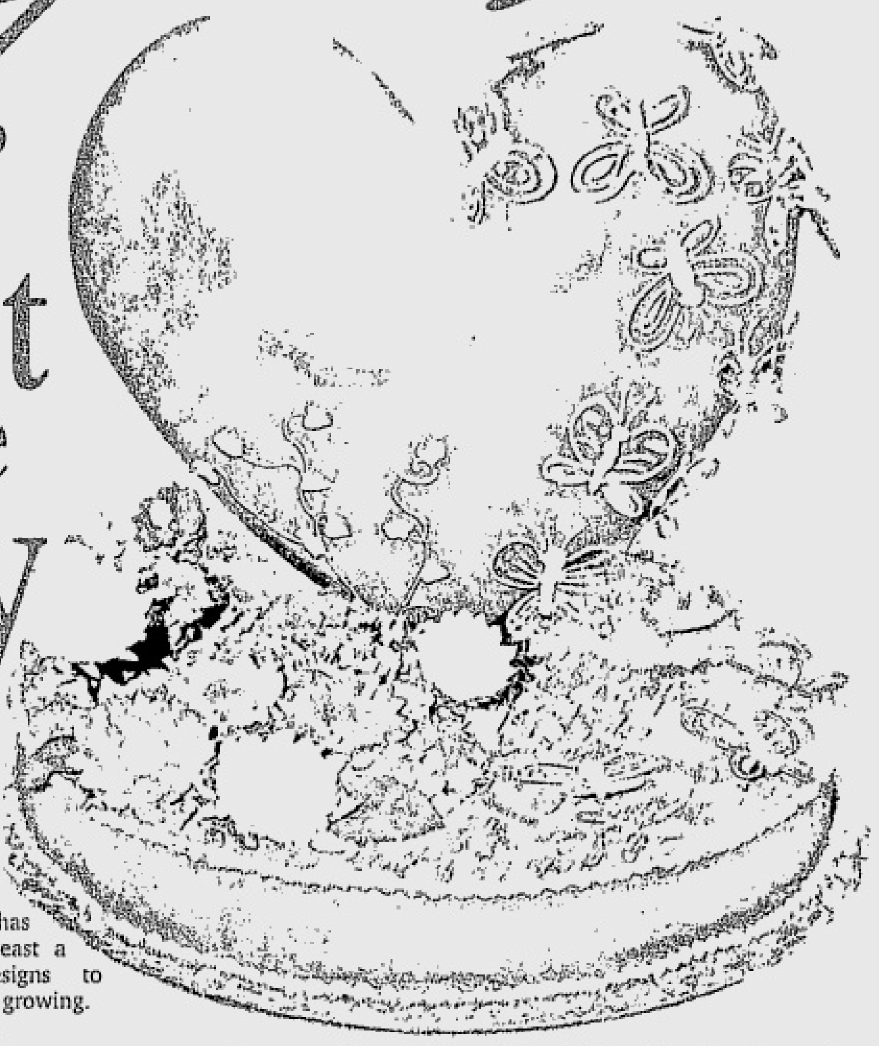
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

When sugar is sweet and a little sleazy



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Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Chito Vecina

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Putting up an adult-themed cake shop was a bold move, and this 36-year-old businessman was understandably worried about ruffling his parents' conservative feathers. Today, however, with Kink Cakes evolving into a family affair, no one is complaining. And, thankfully for Carlos, no other entrepreneur has had the daring to follow suit.

This month, a dozen Valentine-theme cakes are selling at Kink Cakes branches, with designs ranging from the regular (heart-shaped) to the kinkier (sculptured phallic figures and whatnot icing cake toppers).

Too shy? Fret not; there are regular heart-shaped cookies and chocolates arranged in a flowerpot for you. Put on horse blinders when you step into the cake shop, however.

"We encourage our clients to be creative and give their inputs to the design of their cakes," Carlos says. As a result, the bakeshop catalog has compiled at least a thousand designs to date—and still growing.

Customized

Kink Cakes artists will happily help you interpret your design. So what better way to show your sense of humor than a specially designed dessert for your honey? Personalized orders should be made at least two days before delivery.

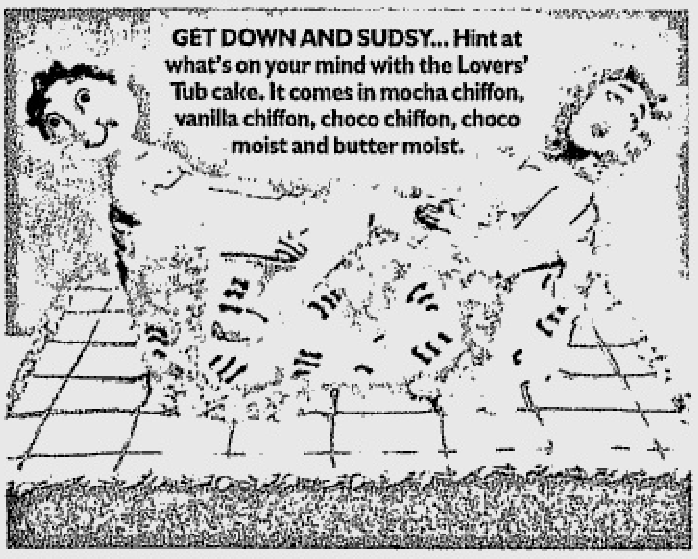
"You'll be surprised," Carlos says with a grin, "most of our clients are women."

For all occasions, several bestsellers are on display daily, including one like its logo of a curvaceous female torso, the penis of a very well-endowed man, a bootylicious female derriere, a variety of post-silicone surgery size female bosom designs, a tiny man caught in the valley between two be-nippled Everests—playful takes on their recipients' (or givers'), well, shortcomings and fantasies.

Cakes come in five flavors and are incredibly friendly priced: from P150+ for the baby cakes (4"), P250+ for the junior size (6") to only about P600+ to P800+ for the bigger sizes. Soon, the shop will introduce cakes using fondant icing. Getting down and *baaad* with clay-like fondant, of course, may require a greater stretch of the imagination.

Kink Cakes also sells adult novelty items like, hmmm, edible undies, scanty panties shaped into long-stemmed roses, and a sundry of sex toys, and penis- and bosom-shaped items to make their recipi-

WHEN/ D2



GET DOWN AND SUDSY... Hint at what's on your mind with the Lovers' Tub cake. It comes in mocha chiffon, vanilla chiffon, choco chiffon, choco moist and butter moist.

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

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NOVALICHES ☎ 936.9757 — SERSIDE / M-PEOPLE — OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM / NO ENTRANCE FEE
BIÑAN ☎ (049)511.7268 — VERSE 2 / MUZIC AERO — OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM / NO ENTRANCE FEE

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JUPITER ☎ 890.4735 — 3RD MOVEMENT — NO ENTRANCE FEE
REMEDIOS ☎ 522.0429 — P R P / SYMPOSIUM — NO ENTRANCE FEE
TOMAS MORATO ☎ 371.1473 — MUSIC ZONE — NO ENTRANCE FEE

FEBRUARY 12 THURSDAY

February Affair At The Stars

It's "Love Month" once again! And what better way to celebrate it than to treat your loved ones to these star-studded Valentine events.

starmall
EDSA-SHAW

FEB 13 4 P.M. — Romantic Rendezvous With 8 OM
FEB 14 5 P.M. — Acoustic Romance with U TURN & ARNEE HIDALGO
FEB 19 — ANNIE B. Movie Mall Tour with JOLINA MAGDANGAL and JORDAN HERRERA
FEB 21 4 P.M. — Bouncing with REGINE TOLENTINO Grand Finals
Wednesdays & Fridays — Romantic Rendezvous @ The Bridge
Sundays 4 P.M. — Stardanz 2004 Elimination Rounds

METROPOLIS star
ALABANG - VIADUCT

FEB 13 5 P.M. — Dream Date With The Stars VALERIE CONCEPCION & DENNIS TRILLO
FEB 14 6 P.M. — Romance With The Stars TOOTSIE GUEVARRA & 8 OM
FEB 22 1 P.M. — Funkids Kiddie Club's 3rd Anniversary
FEB 29 4 P.M. — CARLO AQUINO THEORY BAND Album Tour

Mstar
LAS PIÑAS

FEB 13 7 P.M. — Irresistible Pre-valentine Treat With The King & Princess Of R & B Music LUKE MEJARES and KYLA with SHERYN REGIS

Activity Hub (in coordination with Dencio's Bar & Grill, Mark's Sports Bar, and Gloria Maris)

For event details, please call:

STARMALL
724-4992

METROPOLIS STAR
543-4002

M-STAR
872-5249

SHOW the woman in your life who's the boss with the Love Chair Queen cake.

When sugar is sweet and a little sleazy

Who says you can't have your cake and eat it, too?

SPARE the garden this year in favor of a Panty Rose (P195 each). Or gift the man in your life with Edible Undies (P300). Learn from "Sex in a Minute: A Quickie Survey of Lovemaking" by Billy L. Malang (P200), or measure how "hot" you are with the Thermo Sex (P400). There's also the Sexy Pig figurine (P125) for your naughty friend.

From page D1

ents either blush or roll in laughter.

Not all of Carlos' cakes are restricted for adults, though. Not long ago, he introduced a line called Just For Kids.

"People think that everything we sell is kinky," says Carlos. "Of course, we have to live up to the name, but we want to give variety to our clients."

Soon, Kink Cakes will introduce a novelty line of soaps like the one called Saveguard: Virginity Protection. It follows the launch of candy and chocolate pills called Medi-Kinks and Insta-Kinks-spoofs of medicines with interesting names like Vaog-ra: The Male Contraceptive; Varako: The Macho Papa Pill; Wagi Kah! Instant Ganda Pills; Yakapsul: Para sa Mga Lonely Hearts, among others. They're packed like real meds in white plastic bottles, and are sure to score you points with your pals.

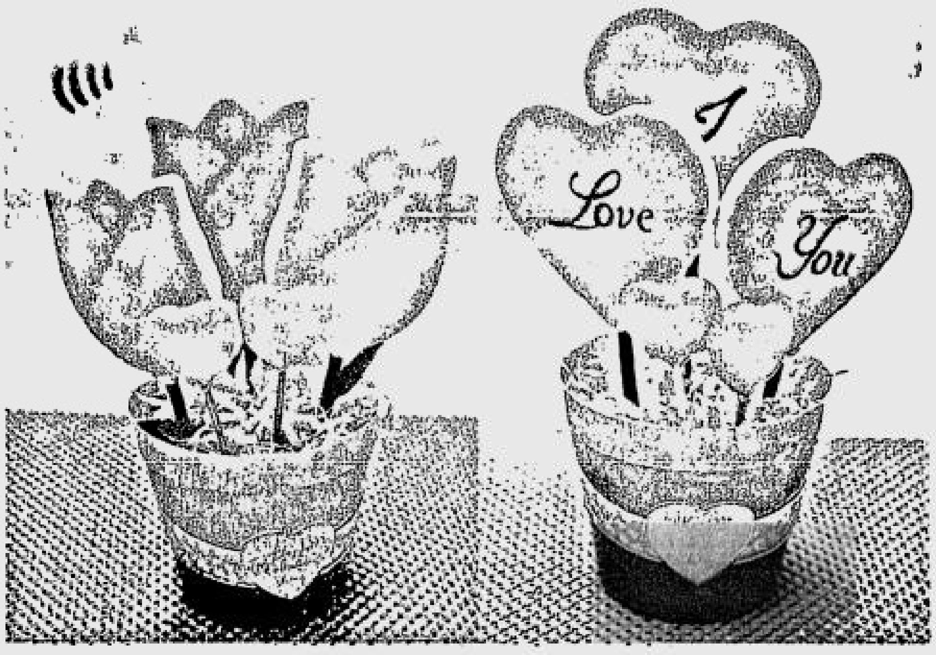
But for this weekend, getting something wicked and sugary to share with your honey just might get you very lucky.

Call Kink Cakes at 3724466/54 (Timog); 8934343 or 8924515 (Makati); 5311992 (Greenhills); 4041693 or 3021426 Malate; 8291044/3059 (Parañaque); 4217745 (Katipunan); 6830927 (SM Megamall) and 822-9041 (SM Bicutan).

E-mail the author at cmoral@inquirer.com.ph

Happy Valentine

FOR GOOD boys and girls, there are several "floral" arrangements for you to choose from, like these potted heart- and tulip-shaped butter-lemon cookies and heart- and bee-shaped chocolate combos (from P150-up).



E-mail boxes flooded with suspicious messages

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

UNSCRUPULOUS senders of e-mail with viruses are evidently using all kinds of ingenious ways to disguise their vicious letters. They are aware that many subscribers delete right away suspicious messages fearing viruses that are supposedly more destructive to computer systems now.

Like many consumers who have sent this column inquiries and complaints about spam that have strangely flooded their e-mail boxes lately, we too have our hefty share. We thank the technical support of our Internet Service Provider (ISP) for providing information about the spate of e-mail viruses. We were advised that, when in doubt, the best thing to do was to delete the message.

Some of the messages are in codes we cannot decipher or contain unexplained attachments. Here are samples of messages: "Mail transaction failed. Partial message is available." Enclosed would be an attachment. The advisory did not come from our ISP. One other e-mail: "It has come to our attention that you have an unpaid account with us. Please see attachment for details." We don't have any unpaid accounts.

Here is another advisory: "The following addresses had permanent fatal error. Users unknown." This one baffled us: "Hi! This is the qmail-sent program at mail3.hsphere.cc. I'm afraid I wasn't able to deliver your messages to the following addresses. This is a permanent error, I've given up. Sorry, it didn't work." (Mailer-daemon addressee was not our ISP so we didn't bother to read the undelivered messages.)

And how about this message? "Would you like to get laid tonight? Get off this list by going here." A curious recipient would probably click the underscored word to gain access to the web site of sender. Heaven knows what awaits.

And then, there are similar advisories that come in different versions: "This message cannot be represented in 7-bit ASCII encoding and has been sent as a binary attachment." A variation: "The message contains Unicode characters and has been sent as a binary attachment."

We thank our ISP technical support Lorie Pascua for advising us on how to download an anti-virus program from www.grisoft.com. She also assured us that the management of I-Manila, our service provider, would soon install more effective anti-virus and spam filters.

Marketing spams

Marketers are also quite aware that e-mail subscribers are likely to junk unsolicited sales letters, so they keep coming up with deceptive messages.

According to the widely read Consumer Reports magazine, ingenious salesmen have come up with different come-ons to bait mail recipients. A typical e-mail reads: "You are receiving this because you have requested it." (Recipient didn't make such a request.)

Many spam messages also have web page links to give the impression that they mean business. They invite consumers to subscribe to the web site and even include an unsubscribe option. However, when Consumer Reports researchers tried to unsubscribe from 24 e-mail spam, they got the following results:

Spam from most sources stopped days later. Some cancellations never took effect because the unsubscribe e-mail address did not work. One marketer ignored the request. And, two others stopped sending spam from the old address but sent them under other names.

Hazardous mobile ads

In view of the election season that started officially last Feb. 10, this letter from Gerald Alcazaren (g0o9led@yahoo.com) comes at the right time. He is calling the attention of the Philippine National Police, Metro Manila Development Authority, Department of Transportation and Communication, and Land Transportation Office to put a stop immediately to illuminated advertisements mounted on moving vehicles. His recent experience while driving on a busy thoroughfare is a fair warning.

He wrote: "I was driving my family last Feb. 7 along Edsa, Cubao and was bound for Pasig when I encountered a brightly-lighted mobile ad of Axe deodorant. It was hugging the left-most lane, not allowing other faster vehicles to pass. This was a violation of our traffic laws. What was worse, it kept flashing light bulbs around the already illuminated ad, making it very difficult for me to see where I was driving. My friend informed me that another company has a similar mobile ad that was even larger in size. Do we have to wait for a tragic accident before this hazardous mobile ads are removed from our streets?"

Lost items

L. Ronin wrote about missing items from *balikbayan* boxes. He said: "It was bad enough that the boxes were delayed. My parents sent the boxes in November when they were still in the U. They came home to the Philippines in December. The boxes arrived in January. When my mother checked all the boxes, she was so surprised to discover that some of the items were missing. We don't know who to blame. Was it the forwarder or Customs?"

Facial cleaning accident

That's right. Facial cleaning in a dermatology clinic could turn into a disaster if the equipment is badly maintained and attendants are irresponsible. The machine could malfunction and release hot water instead of steam causing injury to unprotected customers. A woman customer wrote about her traumatic experience in a facial clinic where she said the faulty machine caused first degree burn near her eye.

She wrote: "The clinic attendant did not put eye pads to protect my eyes from the procedure. What was worse, the clinic did not even have a resident doctor or an emergency service car. When the accident happened, I was told to go to a clinic in Makati for treatment. I had to drive myself to the place where a dermatologist made me wait for more than 15 minutes before she attended to me. She didn't even offer any apology and simply said, '*Ah, di naman pala malala. Mangingitim lang yan parang* sunburn.'"

She sent a photo to show the effects of the defective facial cleaning machine. There were small wrinkle-like scars around her eyes.

I advise consumers to be very careful in choosing clinics for facial cleaning. They should also insist on protective covering over sensitive parts of the face.

Canadian grant to help train out-of-school youth

A GRANT from the Canadian International Development Agency (Cida) will enable the Culinary Education Foundation (CEF) to implement the Culinary Training Program (CTP) for 60 out-of-school youths this year.

CEF received the sponsored award in the First World Bank Philippine Development Innovation Market Place for its "Panibagong Paraan." It was selected from among 120 civil organization finalists.

Under the dual training program for out-of-school youth, participants will undergo a three-month training with instructors of the Center for Culinary Arts (CCA), Manila. They will have their on-the-job-training in various restaurants and hotels in Metro Manila.

Those who complete the program will be assisted by CEF in finding jobs in the food and hospitality industry.

The grant is the first assistance CEF has received from a development agency.

Wine wonders from Down Under

AUSTRALIA has become one of the leading New World wine producers. In Manila, wine drinkers have developed a taste for Australian spirits.

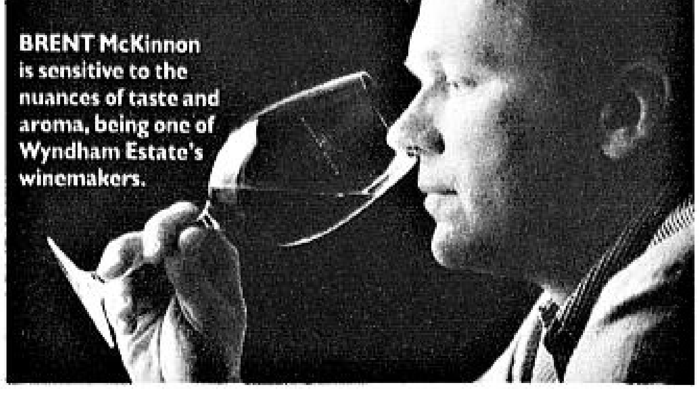
The Hunter Valley Society-Philippines, named after Australia's oldest and most popular wine region, gives Filipino wine consumers access to a fine selection of premium and quality guaranteed wines at up to 25 percent below recommended prices. Specially handpicked by a tasting panel of experts, the wines represent some of the best Australian boutique wines.

These wine finds are delivered straight to members' homes every quarter and are selected to suit Philippine tastes—ranging from fruity white wines to bold, full-flavored reds. Each pack includes wine education notes such as the quality of each wine and food matching.

The Harvard Medical School found Australian wines to contain higher levels of the resveratrol compound, a molecule that mimics the life-extending effects of a calorie-controlled diet.

Call 6879295 or e-mail huntervallevws@mail.com

BEA Zobel Jr. happily receives her inaugural membership certificate to the Hunter Valley Wine Society (Philippines) from Australian Wine Selectors CEO Greg Walls and HBLM Asia CEO and president Arnold Co.


BRENT McKinnon is sensitive to the nuances of taste and aroma, being one of Wyndham Estate's winemakers.

DRINK TO ROMANCE

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, create an opportunity for romance. Invite your friends to a party and encourage everyone to loosen up and be open about their feelings, especially that special someone. Let Franzia wine help advance your cause. Kept in wiretap containers, you need not worry about spilling red wine all over the floor when people really start to get mellow.

Manilans get a taste of the exotic

TASTE the untamed spirit of Africa through Amarula Cream, the newest liqueur to hit Manila's party scene.

The distinctive, fresh, smooth and well-rounded spirit has the full creamy taste and nuances of Africa's exotic Marula fruit!

Amarula was launched recently at Dreambar@6750, whose interiors transported guests to South Africa's gambling haven, Sun City with earthly, rich and loud colors, and tribal elements centered on a golden elephant head.

NBK DJs Manolet Dario and David Jacob treated the crowd to tribal-inspired house music highlighted by tribal drumbeats from nine percussionists led by Fritz Barth of Pinikpikan and Guarana.

Free Amarula on-the-rocks were served by women in royal African Erika Badu-inspired garb.

Amarula is a mixture of fine cream and the essences of Marula, a fruit unique to the warm, frost-free subequatorial African plains. It has a distinctly exotic and rich taste that is both smooth and sweet to the palate.

A special "next shot on us" promo is running in selected Metro Manila bars and clubs.

JR Isaac, Teddy Dario, Myrza Sison

BERNIE Olivarez, Frances Espinosa, Maribel Dario and Marie Balquiedra with an Amarula priestess

Valentine Gifts
Book of Love Poems
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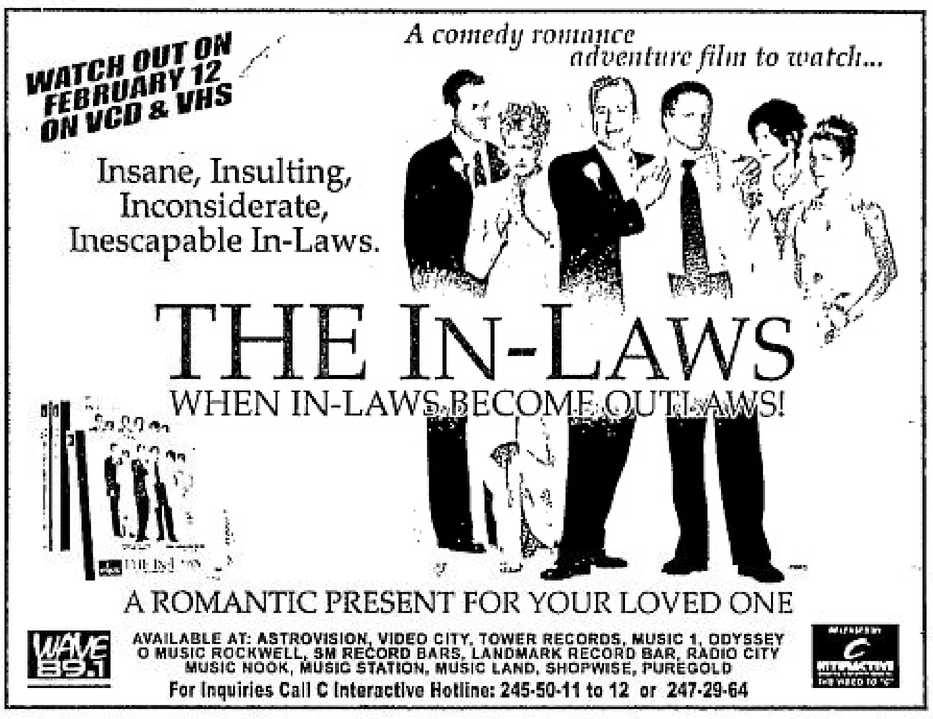
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Traveling school reaches out to food buffs

THEY say the secret to great cooking lies not in the succulent ingredients and exotic flavorings. The key, as many would agree, is taking on the task of cooking for the sheer joy of it.

Dorothy's Cooking School thrives on that and more. It teaches culinary enthusiasts how to become a success in the kitchen while cultivating the passion for delectable concoctions. Fifteen years since it opened its doors to the public, the school now embarks on a novel concept in sharing culinary discipline.

Tasty beginnings

The school was founded by then budding pastry-cook Dorothy MJ Ferreria. Although an AB Communications graduate from the Ateneo de Manila University, Ferreria seemed to have found culinary arts more to her liking when she took her first cooking lesson at age 10.

To become more skilled in her chosen career, she took on courses in candy making and cake decorating at the Wilton School of Cake Decorating and Confectionery Art in Woodridge, Illinois. She also studied Thai cuisine, enrolling in a school in Bangkok, Thailand.

She was a guest demonstrator at the Maya Kitchen for a year before she put up her own Dorothy's Cooking School.

Cooking class on tour

Dorothy's Cooking School proved most successful in reaching out to a wide range of students in Manila. But despite the big number of enrollees, many, especially those in the provinces, could not attend the classes due to problems with access and funds. Some relied on free classes sponsored by private companies or special invitations by culinary experts.

Realizing the need to conduct non-Manila based classes, the school took the initiative of setting up a Traveling Cooking School. It aimed to bring the school's valued culinary teaching to various locations throughout the country at very affordable rates. To be conducted on a regular basis, the school affords cooking enthusiasts and food lovers alike an opportunity to experience learning closer to their homes.

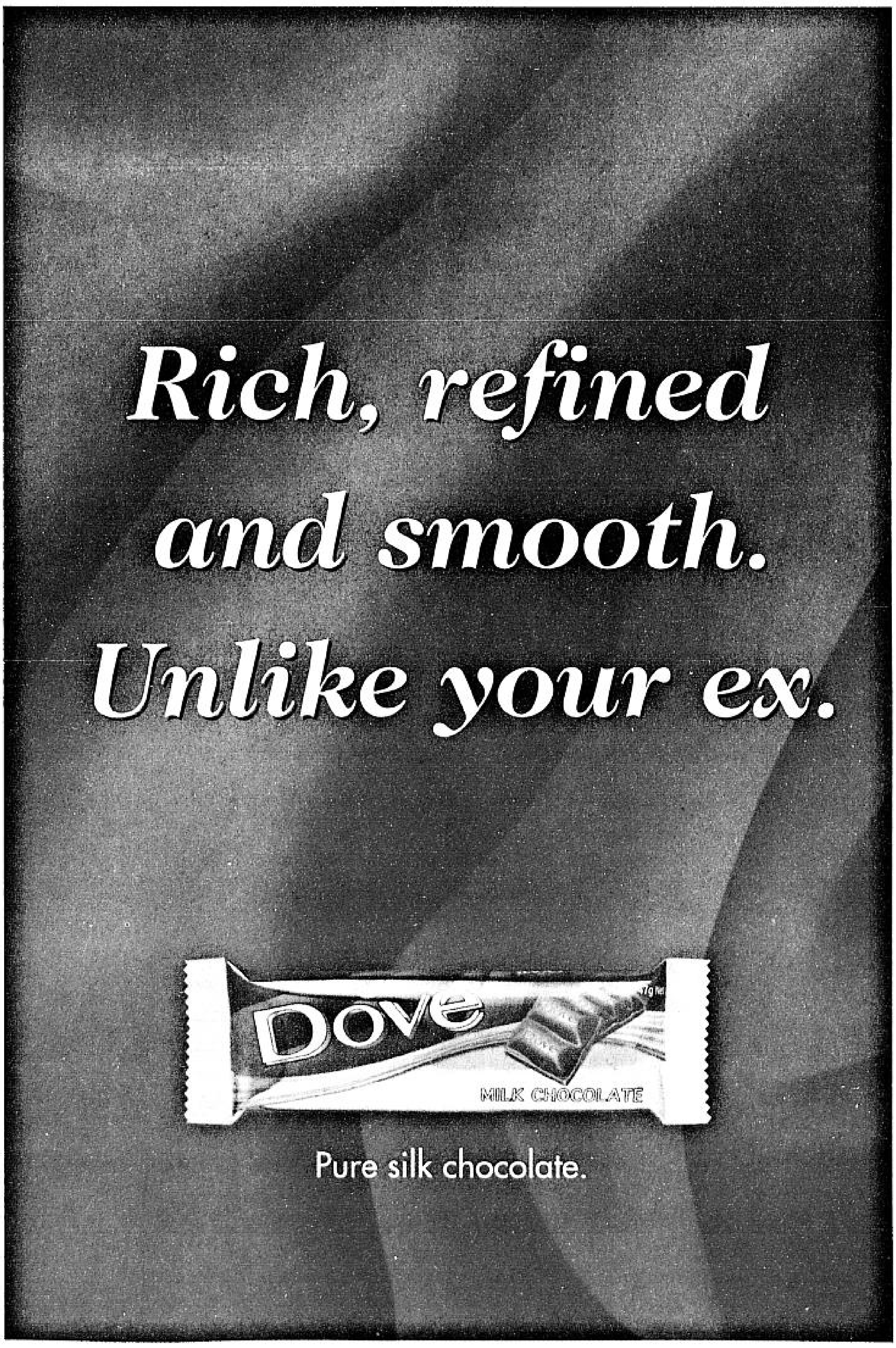
Reaching serious cooks

Last year, the school tapped Aklan's Bakers' Association to hold its first provincial class. It was a three-day hands-on seminar on the basics of baking and cake decorating. Bakery owners and bakers were delighted to have access to new recipes and techniques as well as to update their skills.

The school is currently busy with preparing for scheduled demonstrations in Iloilo and Cebu. It hopes to draw more participants in other key cities particularly in Luzon and Visayas through tie-ups with local organizations and companies.

Call 7217735, fax 7217749 or e-mail dorothyferreria@skyinet.net

HARVEY Ylanan, president (AABA); Catherine Rome, Nenette Cordova, George Patosa (Magnolia, Inc.), Ligaya Tollos, Rachelle Mirasol, secretary (AABA); Virgie Patnogot, assistant secretary (AABA), Josephine Raz, treasurer (AABA) and Dorothy MJ Ferreria


Rich, refined and smooth. Unlike your ex.

Pure silk chocolate.

Hair Loss:
A Woman's Heartache

As a woman, you place more value on your "crowning glory" that when hair loss happens, the effects in your image and self-esteem are devastating. You may also feel that there is less support for you in dealing with your hair loss. At **Svenson International,** you have hope in facing your fears and solving your problem. Trust our consultants' expert advice and our proven effective treatments to stop hair loss and to keep your hair thick and lush again---exactly the way you want it to be.

For women's hair loss, Svenson is here to ease your worries. Call us today.

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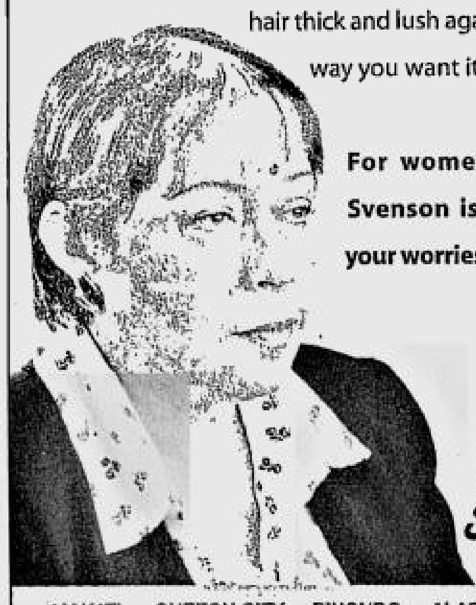

Valentine dinner in a flash

By Dorothy MJ Ferreria
Contributor

FOR those who prefer to celebrate Valentine at home, we have a menu that you can easily prepare. For starters, simmer a creamy soup straight from the can and dress it up with crispy cheese sticks. Or better yet, serve in a bread bowl (available at French Baker) garnished with some spring onions or fresh herbs.

Next, marinate a steak (lamb, rib eye, beef tenderloin, pork tenderloin or chicken thigh meat fillet are recommended cuts) and pan grill to desired doneness. Toss a green salad, using bottled dressing to cut the process short. Toast some dinner rolls and prepare a light dessert.

Don't forget to chill a bottle of wine or champagne. We are also including a Shirley Temple drink for those who prefer something red and different for younger members of the family.

Equally important, dress up the dining table with a nice tablecloth, fresh flowers and candles. Happy Valentine's!

Cheese Sticks

8 slices of loaf bread
¾ c butter, melted
¾ c grated Parmesan or cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 300°F. Trim the crusts from the slices of loaf bread. Slice each piece into four "fingers." Arrange on a cookie sheet and bake for 5 minutes. Invert the bread and re-bake for 5 minutes more to dry it up completely.

Dip each piece briefly in butter. Or brush each piece with butter as an alternative. Roll in cheese and transfer to a cookie sheet lined with foil. Re-bake for 15 minutes more or until toasted. Transfer to containers with tight-fitting covers.

Steak

½ kg lamb chops, or beef tenderloin/rib eye, pork tenderloin or chicken thigh meat fillet

Marinade:
2 tbsp minced garlic
3 tsp dried rosemary leaves
rock salt to taste
black pepper to taste
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp cherry brandy or dark rum
2 tbsp olive oil or corn oil

Gravy:
1/3 c water
2 tsp soy sauce
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp butter
1 tsp finely chopped garlic
½ tsp dried rosemary leaves or 1½ tsp coarsely chopped fresh rosemary
1 tbsp all-purpose flour

Using the back of a knife or a meat mallet, pound the steaks lightly. Marinate for 30 minutes at room temperature. Pan grill to desired doneness. Transfer to a platter to keep warm.

To prepare the gravy, combine the water, the soy sauce and the Worcestershire sauce in a small bowl. Set aside. Melt the butter in the same frying pan used to cook the steak. Briefly sauté the garlic together with the rosemary in the butter. Add the flour and mix well. Pour in the soy sauce mixture and continue to cook until the sauce thickens to the desired consistency. Strain if a smooth gravy is desired. Pour over the steaks or serve separately.

Panna Cotta with Mandarin Orange Topping

1 tbsp unflavored gelatin
1 c fresh milk
1/3 c white sugar
1 ¾ cs all-purpose cream
1 tbsp orange liqueur (optional) or ½ tsp orange extract
1 can mandarin oranges in light syrup

Disperse the gelatin in 1 cup of milk. Mix well and let stand for 3 minutes to allow the gelatin granules to swell. Transfer the mixture to a large saucepan. Pour in the sugar and the cream. Cook over the lowest possible heat until the gelatin dissolves completely taking care that the mixture does not boil. Stir in the orange liqueur/orange extract and divide among ramekins or goblets. Chill until firm.

Before serving top the panna cotta with several pieces of mandarin orange. Serve cold.

Shirley Temple Drink

2 tbsp grenadine syrup
2 tbsp cherry brandy
Sprite, well chilled
maraschino cherry

Pour grenadine syrup and cherry brandy into a tall glass. Drop a maraschino cherry and pour in some Sprite (about three-fourths full). Add crushed ice.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria offers cooking, baking and cake decorating classes at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City and in key provincial cities. Call 7217735 or e-mail dorothyferreria@skyinet.net.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
MONDAY	Hotcake with butter and strawberry jam Maple flavored bacon Coffee, chocolate or iced tea Bananas with cottage cheese	Chicken *afritada* with bell peppers and potatoes Rice Sweetened *garbanzos*	Picadillo soup with ground beef and potatoes Breaded pork chops Rice Chilled star apple
TUESDAY	*Ensaymada* or *mamon* Slices of cheese Pan-grilled ham or spam Coffee, chocolate or fruit juice	*Paksiw na plapla* *Gisadong ampalaya* Rice Chilled wedges of melon	Wonton noodle soup Fried *lumpiang* shanghai Fried rice Almond jelly
WEDNESDAY	Omelette with spring onions and cheese Bottled sardines *Pandesal* Coffee or chocolate Papaya with *calamansi*	Pork steak with onion rings Vegetable chopsuey Rice Fruit cocktail with ice	*Sinampalukang manok* Rice *Minatamis na saba*
THURSDAY	*Embotido* or meatloaf Loaf bread Butter, mayo and cheddar cheese Coffee, chocolate or iced tea Melon with calamansi	Misua soup with clams Steamed *apahap* or *plapla* Boiled baby *bok choy* with fried garlic topping Rice Ripe mangoes ala mode	Spaghetti carbonara Fried chicken wings Garlic bread Mocha ice cream
FRIDAY	Cereal and milk with sliced bananas and cinnamon Bread Chicken vienna sausage Butter, cheese spreads Coffee, chocolate or yogurt drink	Chicken *adobo* with quail eggs *Gisadong sitaw* with crushed *chicharon* topping Rice Star apple	*Nilagang baka* na may *saba, kamote at chorizo* Rice Crema de fruta cake
SATURDAY	Garlic rice *Tapa* Fried egg Coffee, hot chocolate or iced tea Fresh fruit platter	*Kinilaw na tanigue* Green mango salad *Inihaw na bangus, hito at dalag* *Inihaw na liempo* Rice Fresh fruit platter	Cream of asparagus soup Tossed greens with fried *kesong puti* Steak with gravy Pasta puttanesca Panna cotta
SUNDAY	Chicken *arroz caldo* Fresh fruit platter	Miso soup Shrimp, fish and vegetable tempura Rice *Buko gelatin*	*Lumpiang ubod* Roast chicken Rice Store-bought *maja blanca*

Short cooking courses redesigned and upgraded

MAYA Kitchen has newly upgraded and designed short courses.

The Restaurant Operations class will be conducted 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Friday and Saturday, Feb. 13 and 14. Discussions will cover kitchen organization, cycle menu planning, costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll, inventory, and restaurant work. More time will be given to menu presentation and techniques for profitable service operations.

Free lunch will be served.

Pasta Sampler will be 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on Feb. 14. The course includes Lasagna, Chicken Canneloni, Pasta Negra, Ravioli, Garlic Fettucini, Carbonara, Putanesca and Pesto. Also included is how to make fresh pasta.

Another course scheduled 1:30-5 p.m., Feb. 14, is Cookie Craft. To be taught are all-time favorite cookie recipes like Pinwheel Cookies, Rhumballs, No-Roll Sugar Cookies, Danish butter, Chocolate Chip and Crinkles. Packaging and costing will also be discussed. Cookie mix will be given for free.

For certificate courses with hands-on, Cooking 2 is slated 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Feb. 17 and 20.

Topics include: review of basic principles and preparation of stocks, soups, sauces; introduction to the cuisines of the world; menu planning and culinary arithmetic; kitchen food flow and control; hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP); food storage and temperature; recipe formulation and standardization including mechanics in writing marinades and sauces; and actual demo/workshop of Asian, Western and European dishes plus cocktails.

Visit the Maya Kitchen Tuesday-Saturday, 8/F, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue, formerly Pasay Rd., Makati City. Call 8921185 or 8925011 local 108, or e-mail mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph.

MEN'S SALE
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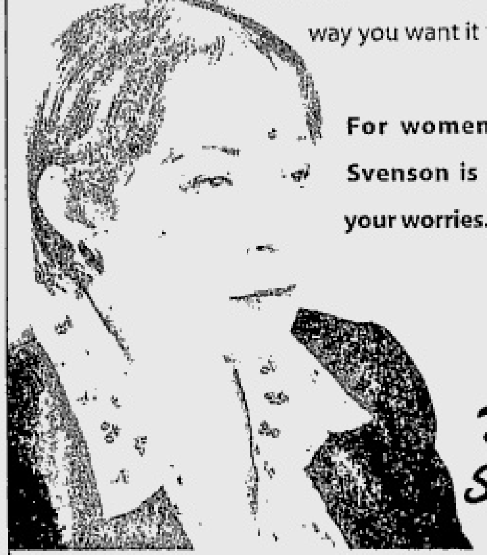

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Valentine dinner in a flash

By Dorothy MJ Ferreria
Contributor

FOR those who prefer to celebrate Valentine at home, we have a menu that you can easily prepare. For starters, simmer a creamy soup straight from the can and dress it up with crispy cheese sticks. Or better yet, serve in a bread bowl (available at French Baker) garnished with some spring onions or fresh herbs.

Next, marinate a steak (lamb, rib eye, beef tenderloin, pork tenderloin or chicken thigh meat fillet are recommended cuts) and pan grill to desired doneness. Toss a green salad, using bottled dressing to cut the process short. Toast some dinner rolls and prepare a light dessert.

Don't forget to chill a bottle of wine or champagne. We are also including a Shirley Temple drink for those who prefer something red and different for younger members of the family.

Equally important, dress up the dining table with a nice tablecloth, fresh flowers and candles. Happy Valentine's!

Cheese Sticks

8 slices of loaf bread
¾ c butter, melted
¾ c grated Parmesan or cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 300°F. Trim the crusts from the slices of loaf bread. Slice each piece into four "fingers." Arrange on a cookie sheet and bake for 5 minutes. Invert the bread and re-bake for 5 minutes more to dry it up completely.

Dip each piece briefly in butter. Or brush each piece with butter as an alternative. Roll in cheese and transfer to a cookie sheet lined with foil. Re-bake for 15 minutes more or until toasted. Transfer to containers with tight-fitting covers.

Steak

·. kg lamb chops, or beef tenderloin/rib eye, pork tenderloin or chicken thigh meat fillet

Marinade:
2 tbsp minced garlic
3 tsp dried rosemary leaves
rock salt to taste
black pepper to taste
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp cherry brandy or dark rum
2 tbsp olive oil or corn oil

Gravy:
1/3 c water
2 tsp soy sauce
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp butter
1 tsp finely chopped garlic
½ tsp dried rosemary leaves or 1½ tsp coarsely chopped fresh rosemary
1 tbsp all-purpose flour

Using the back of a knife or a meat mallet, pound the steaks lightly. Marinate for 30 minutes at room temperature. Pan grill to desired doneness. Transfer to a platter to keep warm.

To prepare the gravy, combine the water, the soy sauce and the Worcestershire sauce in a small bowl. Set aside. Melt the butter in the same frying pan used to cook the steak. Briefly sauté the garlic together with the rosemary in the butter. Add the flour and mix well. Pour in the soy sauce mixture and continue to cook until the sauce thickens to the desired consistency. Strain if a smooth gravy is desired. Pour over the steaks or serve separately.

Panna Cotta with Mandarin Orange Topping

1 tbsp unflavored gelatin
1 c fresh milk
1/3 c white sugar
1 ¾ cs all-purpose cream
1 tbsp orange liqueur (optional) or ½ tsp orange extract
1 can mandarin oranges in light syrup

Disperse the gelatin in 1 cup of milk. Mix well and let stand for 3 minutes to allow the gelatin granules to swell. Transfer the mixture to a large saucepan. Pour in the sugar and the cream. Cook over the lowest possible heat until the gelatin dissolves completely taking care that the mixture does not boil. Stir in the orange liqueur/orange extract and divide among ramekins or goblets. Chill until firm.

Before serving top the panna cotta with several pieces of mandarin orange. Serve cold.

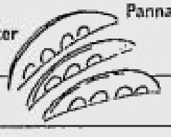
Shirley Temple Drink

2 tbsp grenadine syrup
2 tbsp cherry brandy
Sprite, well chilled
maraschino cherry

Pour grenadine syrup and cherry brandy into a tall glass. Drop a maraschino cherry and pour in some Sprite (about three-fourths full). Add crushed ice.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria offers cooking, baking and cake decorating classes at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City and in key provincial cities. Call 7217735 or e-mail dorothyferreria@skyinet.net.

MONDAY	Hotcake with butter and strawberry jam Maple flavored bacon Coffee, chocolate or iced tea Bananas with cottage cheese	Chicken *afritada* with bell peppers and potatoes Rice Sweetened *garbanzos*	Picadillo soup with ground beef and potatoes Breaded pork chops Rice Chilled star apple
TUESDAY	*Ensaymada or mamon* Slices of cheese Pan-grilled ham or spam Coffee, chocolate or fruit juice	*Paksiw na plapla* *Gisadong ampalaya* Rice Chilled wedges of melon	Wonton noodle soup Fried *lumpiang* shanghai Fried rice Almond jelly
WEDNESDAY	Omelette with spring onions and cheese Bottled sardines *Pandesal* Coffee or chocolate Papaya with *calamansi*	Pork steak with onion rings Vegetable chopsuey Rice Fruit cocktail with ice	*Sinampalukang manok* Rice *Minatamis na saba*
THURSDAY	*Embotido* or meatloaf Loaf bread Butter, mayo and cheddar cheese Coffee, chocolate or iced tea Melon with calamansi	Misua soup with clams Steamed *apahap* or *plapla* Boiled baby *bok choy* with fried garlic topping Rice Ripe mangoes ala mode	Spaghetti carbonara Fried chicken wings Garlic bread Mocha ice cream
FRIDAY	Cereal and milk with sliced bananas and cinnamon Bread Chicken vienna sausage Butter, cheese spreads Coffee, chocolate or yogurt drink	Chicken *adobo* with quail eggs *Gisadong sitaw* with crushed *chicharon* topping Rice Star apple	*Nilagang baka* na may *saba, kamote at chorizo* Rice Crema de fruta cake
SATURDAY	Garlic rice *Tapa* Fried egg Coffee, hot chocolate or iced tea Fresh fruit platter	*Kinilaw na tanigue* Green mango salad *Inihaw na bangus, hito at dalag* *Inihaw na liempo* Rice Fresh fruit platter	Cream of asparagus soup Tossed greens with fried *kesong puti* Steak with gravy Pasta puttanesca Panna cotta
SUNDAY	Chicken *arroz caldo* Fresh fruit platter	Miso soup Shrimp, fish and vegetable tempura Rice *Buko gelatin*	*Lumpiang ubod* Roast chicken Rice Store-bought *maja blanca*



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Short cooking courses redesigned and upgraded

MAYA Kitchen has newly upgraded and designed short courses.

The Restaurant Operations class will be conducted 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Friday and Saturday, Feb. 13 and 14. Discussions will cover kitchen organization, cycle menu planning, costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll, inventory, and restaurant work. More time will be given to menu presentation and techniques for profitable service operations.

Free lunch will be served.

Pasta Sampler will be 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on Feb. 14. The course includes Lasagna, Chicken Canneloni, Pasta Negra, Ravioli, Garlic Fettucini, Carbonara, Putanesca and Pesto. Also included ·is how to make fresh pasta.

Another course scheduled 1:30-5 p.m., Feb. 14, is Cookie Craft. To be taught are all-time favorite cookie recipes like Pinwheel Cookies, Rhumballs, No-Roll Sugar Cookies, Danish butter, Chocolate Chip and Crinkles. Packaging and costing will also be discussed. Cookie mix will be given for free.

For certificate courses with hands-on, Cooking 2 is slated 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Feb. 17 and 20.

Topics include: review of basic principles and preparation of stocks, soups, sauces; introduction to the cuisines of the world; menu planning and culinary arithmetic; kitchen food flow and control; hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP); food storage and temperature; recipe formulation and standardization including mechanics in writing marinades and sauces; and actual demo/workshop of Asian, Western and European dishes plus cocktails.

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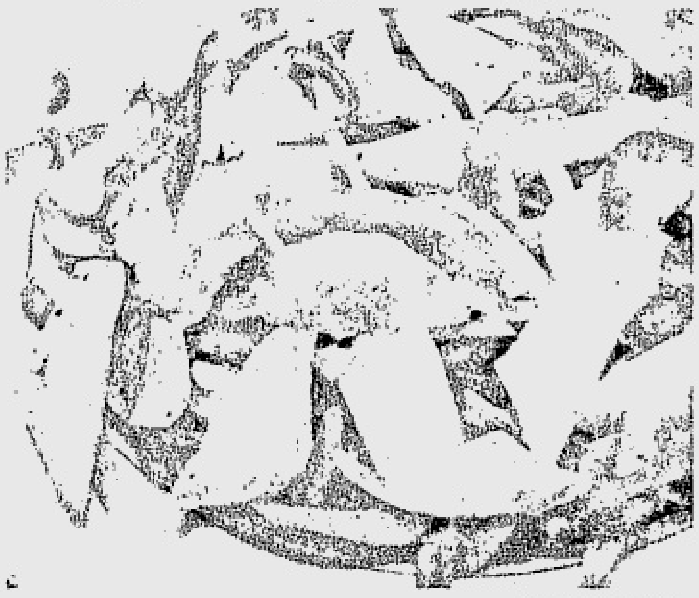
PINAPUTOK na Seafood

Loving dishes from the Kapampangan

THIS February, Cabalen serves Seafood Specials in its "eat-all-u-can, eat-all-u-want" P249 buffet. Crab Rice, rice mixed with crab meat and egg; Pinaputok na Seafood, a mixture of seafood (shrimp, *tahong*, *halaan*, *bangus*, *alimasag* and *pusit*) grilled in onion and tomatoes; and Kilawin Pusit. Every group of six diners gets a free bucket of oysters.

Also, Cabalen will be giving away free accommodations for two at the Island Cove Beach resort. For every buffet and Nestea or lemonade, guest will get one raffle coupon. Promo runs until Feb. 14.

Food lovers may visit Cabalen restaurant's 10 branches at West Avenue, QC; Katipunan Ave., QC; SM Megamall, Mandaluyong; SM City Manila; SM City North Edsa, QC; Glorietta 3, Makati; Robinsons Place Ermita, Manila; Robinsons Starmills, Pampanga; Brick Road Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall; and Harrison Plaza Village Square, Manila. Visit www. cabalen.com.ph



KILAWIN Pusit

Crab Rice

1/8 c butter
1 head garlic, minced
2 pcs onion, minced
3 pcs tomatoes, minced
14 c crabmeat
2 tbsp patis
2 tbsp butter
1½ tbsp garlic, minced
1 kg cooked rice
3 pcs egg, scrambled fried
¼ c spring onion

Peel, crush and mince garlic. Peel and mince onion. Wash and mince tomatoes, set aside. Scramble egg then fry. Slice into strips, set aside. Wash and slice spring onion, set aside. Disperse cooked rice, set aside.

In a wok, saute garlic in butter until brown, add onion and cook until wilted, add tomatoes. Stir in crabmeat. Season with *patis*, stir. Remove from fire and set aside. Saute again garlic in butter until brown, add sauteed crabmeat. Add dispersed cooked rice, stirring and rolling until evenly mixed. Add spring onion, stir and saute for 10 seconds. Add fried scrambled egg. Remove fire. Ready to eat.

Pinaputok na Seafoods

¼ kg *halaan*, medium
½ kg *alimasag*, small; cut into halves
¼ kg *pusit adobo*, ½ inch slice
200 g back *bangus*, 10 g/strips
¼ kg *hipon puti*
¼ kg *tahong*, medium
Mixed vegetables filling:
2 pcs red onion, sliced thinly
½ c celery, sliced
5 pcs tomatoes, cubed
½ c ginger with skin, sliced thinly
½ c onion leeks, strips
¼ c garlic with skin, crushed
¼ tsp ground black pepper
2 tbsp Knorr Seasoning
1 tsp calamansi extract
1 tsp salt
¼ c margarine

Wash all ingredients. Remove inner carapace of crabs. Blanch for five minutes, cool and slice into halves, set aside. Remove quill and mouth of *pusit adobo*, slice each into three ½ inch-thick pieces. Slice back *bangus* into strips—10 g/pc (slant). Slice tomatoes into cubes. Peel and slice onions thinly. Slice celery thinly. Slice onion leeks into slanted strips. Slice ginger thinly. Crush garlic, set aside.

In a clean container, combine all ingredients for mixed vegetable filling. Weigh 100 g for every one order of mixed seafoods. For one order of mixed seafoods: combine 2 pcs *halaan*, ½ crab, 3 pcs *pusit adobo*, 2 pcs 20-g back *bangus*, 1 pc *hipon puti* and 2 pcs *tahong*. Do the same with the rest of the ingredients. Put mixed vegetable filling in banana leaves, add one order mixed seafoods. Add 1 tsp margarine, fold the banana leaves. Wrap again with aluminum foil. Grill for 20 minutes or until done (don't turn the wrapped mixed seafoods). Unwrap (but don't remove banana leaves) and serve.

Kilawin Pusit

3 pcs *pusit lumot*
Kilawin sauce:
5 tbsp calamansi extract
5 tbsp vinegar
¼ c red bell pepper, strips
¼ c green bell pepper, strips
2 pcs medium red onion, sliced thinly
1 pc ginger, cut into thin strips
¼ tsp ground black pepper
2 pcs native hot pepper (*labuyo*), minced
4 tsp salt
¼ c spring onion, sliced

Wash *pusit lumot*, remove quill and mouth. Grill for 10 minutes or until half-cooked. Scrape skin, discard head. Split body into half, slice lengthwise into three pieces then slice into 1/4"-thick strips. Set aside. Wash all vegetable ingredients. Slice red and green bell pepper into strips. Peel and slice ginger into strips. Peel and slice onion thinly. Slice *labuyo*, set aside. Slice spring onion, set aside.

In a clean bowl, mix all ingredients for *kilawin* sauce. Add *pusit* strips and toss evenly. Ready to serve.

CRAB Rice

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The Maya Kitchen Culinary Arts Center, one of the country's respected culinary schools, has upgraded its short courses and made them more interesting and more substantial. Culinary enthusiasts who wish to go headlong in a pool of learning will enjoy the workshop classes that have been lengthened in duration to accommodate more topics. Enrolment will be limited to create a more comfortable and learning-conducive atmosphere. Check the schedules below and enroll now.

Restaurant Operations: Feb. 13 & 14 (Fri & Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Kitchen organization, cycle menu planning, costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll, inventory, and restaurant works, menu presentation of new popular restaurant, proven techniques on profitable service operations with free lunch. P3,000.

Pasta Sampler: Feb. 14 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lasagna, Chicken Canneloni, Pasta Negra, Ravioli, Garlic Fettucini, Carbonara, Puttanesca, Pesto. Bonus: How to make fresh pasta. P750.

Cookie Craft: Feb. 14 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Pinwheel Cookies, Rhumballs, No-Roll Sugar Cookies, Danish butter, Chocolate Chip, Crinkles. Includes packaging and costing. Free cookie mix. P700.

Sarap Pinoy Kakanin: Feb. 21 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Cassava Cake, Pichi Pichi, Bibingkang Malagkit, Cuchinta, Puto, Tamales. Bonus: Maya Bibingka. Free Bibingka mix P750.

Japanese Cooking: Feb. 28 (Sat) 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Miso Soup, Mixed Tempura, Sukiyaki, Kamameshi; assorted sushi: Kappamaki, Tekamaki, California Maki and Nigiri. P1,000 with free cookbook.

Gulaman Magic: Feb. 28 (Sat) 2 - 5 p.m. Cathedral Window, Almond Gulaman Taho & Cooler, Buko-Pandan Jello, Fruity Chewy Salad, Coffee Mousse. Free Maya Quick & easy Gulaman to the first 20 enrollees. P500.

CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON. (Limited enrolment, pre-registration requied)

Cooking 2: Feb. 17-20 (T-F) 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Review of basic principles and preparation of stocks, soups, sauces. Introduction to the cuisines of the world. Menu Planning and culinary arithmetic; kitchen food flow and control; hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP); food storage and temperature. Recipe formulation and standardization including mechanics in writing marinades and sauces. Actual demo/workshop of Asian, Western and European dishes plus cocktails. P4,500.

Advanced Baking: Feb. 21 & 28 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Baking ingredients and their functions, baker's percentage/math, Actual preparation of specialty cookies, pies, Danish/puff pastries, batter type cake, sponge, chiffon type, bread and dough production; no time versus straight, and sponge and dough type. Baking magic with prepared mixes. P3,000.

Cooking I (Basic): Feb. 24-27 or Mar. 16-19 (Tue-Fri) 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Proper Hygiene; Sanitation and Safety; Nutrition and Nutritional Cooking; Stocks, Soups and Sauces and its 1001 poultry, fish, shellfish, fruits and vegetables, common herbs and spices; Purchasing; Marketing and Proper Storage; Menu Planning; Simple Garnish and Plate Presentation. Plus actual cooking workshop on the preparation of dishes from appetizer to dessert. P3,500.

Baking I (Basic): Mar. 2-5 (T-F) 1:30-5 p.m. Techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast breads and more. P2,500 with free cookbook.

Cake Decorating (Basic): Mar. 6 & 13 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Lecture-workshop on fundamentals of cake decorating; coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, butter, caramel, chocolate, sugar icing); basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flower making, bunching and motif, and basic fondant. Free decorating tips. P3,000

For inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays thru Saturdays) at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108, or e-mail us at *mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph*

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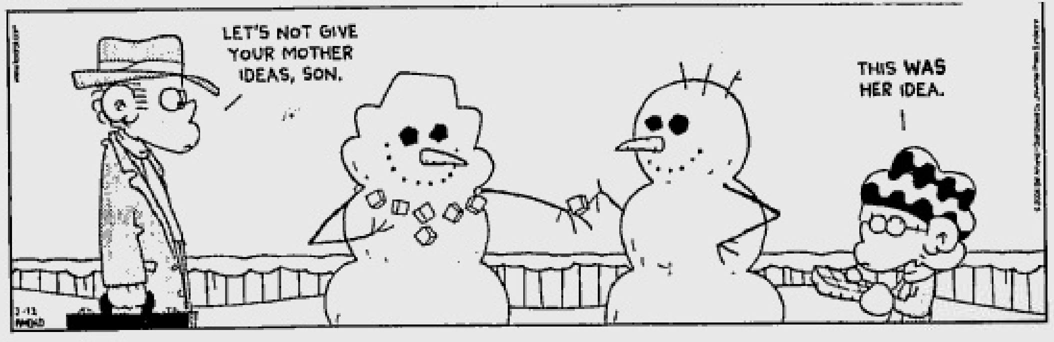
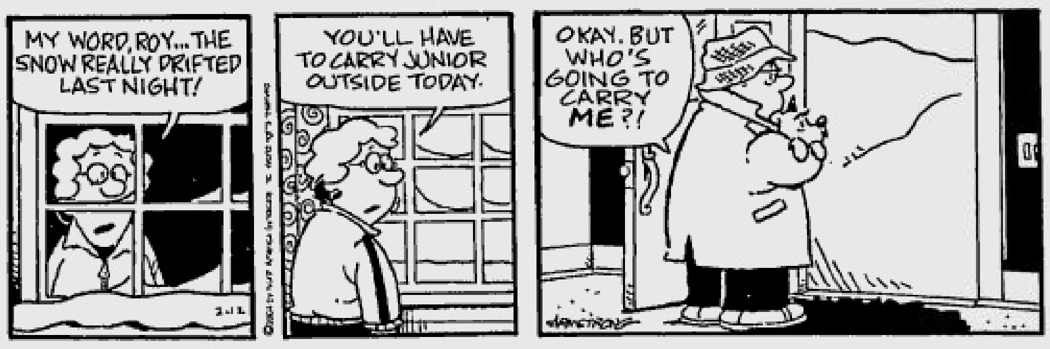
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


LET'S NOT GIVE YOUR MOTHER IDEAS, SON.
THIS WAS HER IDEA.

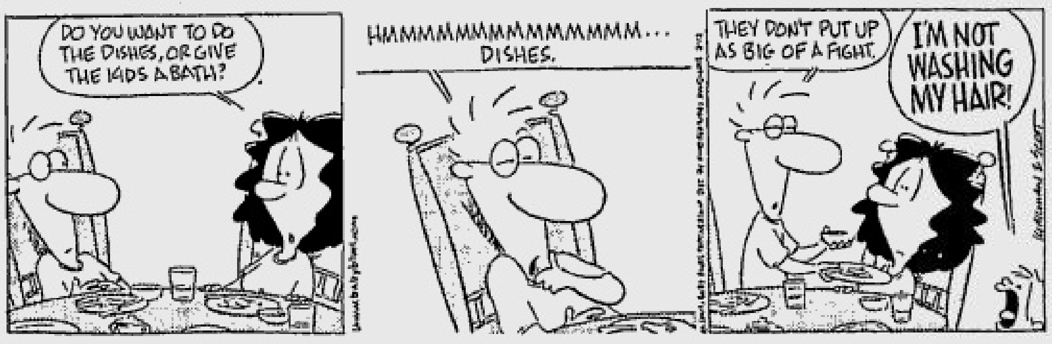
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


MY WORD, ROY... THE SNOW REALLY DRIFTED LAST NIGHT!
YOU'LL HAVE TO CARRY JUNIOR OUTSIDE TODAY.
OKAY. BUT WHO'S GOING TO CARRY ME?!

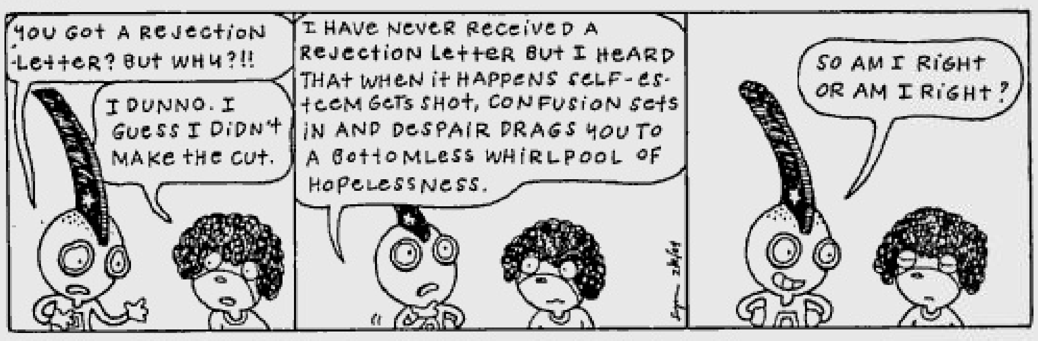
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DO YOU WANT TO DO THE DISHES, OR GIVE THE KIDS A BATH?
HMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM... DISHES.
THEY DON'T PUT UP AS BIG OF A FIGHT.
I'M NOT WASHING MY HAIR!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


YOU GOT A REJECTION LETTER? BUT WHY?!!
I DUNNO. I GUESS I DIDN'T MAKE THE CUT.
I HAVE NEVER RECEIVED A REJECTION LETTER BUT I HEARD THAT WHEN IT HAPPENS SELF-ESTEEM GETS SHOT, CONFUSION SETS IN AND DESPAIR DRAGS YOU TO A BOTTOMLESS WHIRLPOOL OF HOPELESSNESS.
SO AM I RIGHT OR AM I RIGHT?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: There are many sides to you; but essentially, you are protective of your loved ones. You will fight for the rights of others. You're also pragmatic and practical. You will always be faithful to your inner vision of improving society. Close relationships are important this year. Partnerships require all your attention.
Birthdate of: Abraham Lincoln, US president; Christina Ricci, actress; Charles Darwin, evolutionist.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Don't be surprised if you attract rather intense or powerful people to you today. Whatever you do, you'll feel more emotionally involved than usual. (It's no big deal.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today loved ones and partners seem to be more important to you than usual. Don't let this make you feel jealous or possessive. (That makes everyone miserable!)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Turn your attention to home crafts, personal hygiene and generally reorganizing the personal aspects of your life today. Shop for all those little things at the drugstore that you need.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Romance is quite powerful and emotional today. Regardless of your own sex, interactions with women are quite intense. Be kind; be patient.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Today is a good day to be alone. You need to protect yourself from the hectic demands of the outside world. Think about how your long-term habits control your life. (Maybe some of them are no longer appropriate.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your communication with others operates at a "gut level" today. That's OK. This is a good time to test your hunches and go with the flow.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Don't be surprised if you identify strongly with your possessions today. We all feel attached to the things we own. We see them as extensions of ourselves. But actually, if you think about it, it's absurd.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): The Moon is in your sign today, which is why you feel a strong need to relate to friends and loved ones. Fortunately, it's easier to be emotionally giving to those around you.

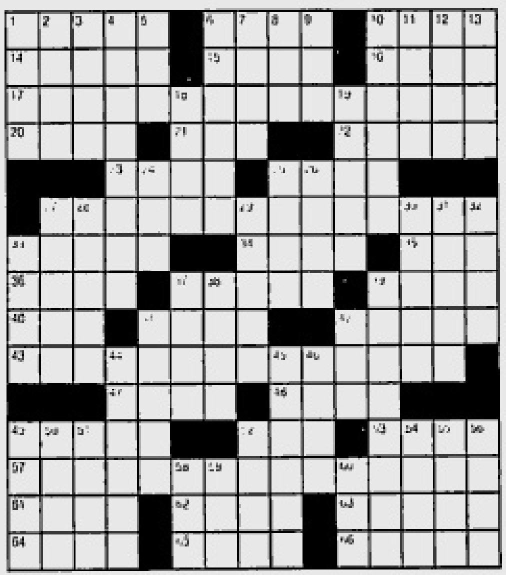
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Seek solitude in pleasant surroundings today if you can. You will especially enjoy the countryside, a park or any quiet setting.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your contact with a friend is important to you today. Perhaps you have something personal you want to discuss. Do it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Certain facts about you might come out into the open today—even a public argument! (Horrors.) Try to keep things a bit more low-key.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Try to do something today that is a break from your usual daily routine. You need to get away. You want to learn new and different things. At least visit different stores and shops or take a different route home.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

2/12/04

ACROSS
1 Rocky outcrops
6 Peak
10 Rascals
14 Painter Matisse
15 Incite
16 Genesis patriarch
17 Start of an Anton Chekhov comment
20 Lifeless
21 Dramatic signal
22 Possible mirages
23 Yeah, sure
25 Gull relative
27 Part 2 of comment
33 Tolerated
34 Pot sweetener
35 Sleeve card
36 Part of AARP
37 Dreadlocks wearer
39 Pete Townshend's "__ Skirt"
40 Gray soldier
41 Monster loch
42 School collars and jackets
43 Part 3 of comment
47 Compare prices
48 Fulda tributary
49 Pope who negotiated with Attila
52 Russian chess master
53 Abundant
57 End of comment
61 Jug handles
62 __ vera
63 Froth
64 Powerful trend
65 Author Ayn
66 Slalom curves

DOWN
1 Libyan neighbor
2 Philosopher Descartes
3 Writer Seton
4 Football field
5 Silly Caesar
6 Tropical rodent
7 Sheep shed
8 Fella
9 Writer LeShan
10 Babe
11 Extinct birds
12 Rate of speed
13 Females
18 Cools down
19 Scandinavians
24 Auction offer
25 Trace of color
26 Blues great James
27 All confused
28 Bill of "I Spy"
29 Impudent
30 Fire-extinguishing agent
31 Cake coverage
32 Hardens
33 Orange-red chalcedony
37 Change completely
38 Hurry-up letters
39 Footrests
41 Not in any way
42 Holiday lead-in
44 African fly
45 Rented
46 Lazily
49 Editor's marginal note
50 From Bangkok
51 Fat
52 Disney sci-fi movie
54 Promissory notes
55 Seethe
56 Somme summers
58 Sense organ
59 Chicken __ king
60 Full of: suff.

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

A	L	E	C	■	M	G	R	■	G	R	O	W	T	H
R	O	B	O	■	C	R	U	■	R	E	T	I	R	E
F	L	A	N	■	C	R	E	W	E	L	C	R	E	W
S	A	Y	S	N	O	■	H	E	M	O	■	Y	E	S
■	■	■	T	E	Y	■	L	I	L	A	C	■	■	■
P	I	C	A	S	S	O	■	■	I	N	A	F	O	G
E	V	A	N	S	■	L	I	M	N	■	P	O	C	O
C	O	P	T	■	L	E	N	A	S	■	T	O	T	O
K	R	O	C	■	U	S	C	G	■	O	A	T	E	S
S	Y	N	O	D	S	■	■	I	M	P	I	E	T	Y
■	■	■	N	U	T	S	O	■	E	I	N	■	■	■
A	S	A	■	P	I	T	S	■	D	E	S	I	C	A
C	O	D	D	L	E	D	C	O	D	■	C	O	R	M
L	A	D	I	E	S	■	A	O	L	■	A	W	A	Y
U	P	N	E	X	T	■	R	O	E	■	P	A	M	S

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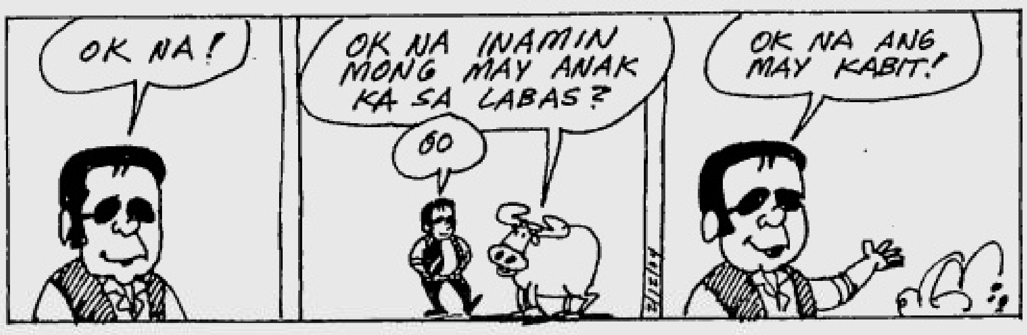
2/12/04

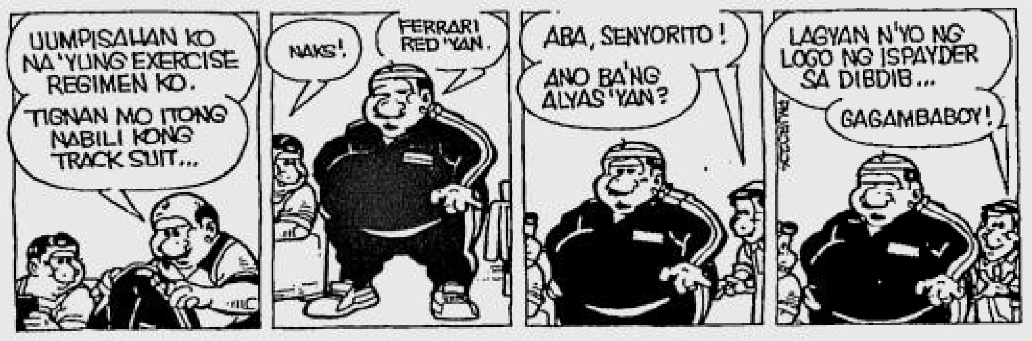
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


OK NA!
OK NA INAMIN MONG MAY ANAK KA SA LABAS?
OO
OK NA ANG MAY KABIT!

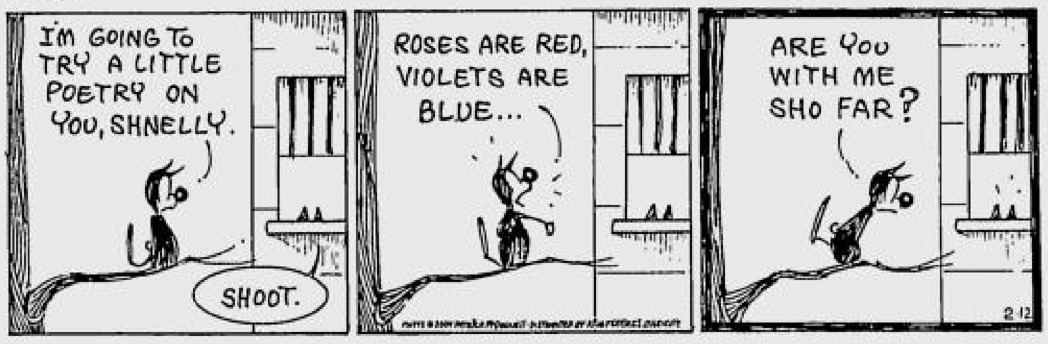
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


UUMPISAHAN KO NA 'YUNG EXERCISE REGIMEN KO.
TIGNAN MO ITONG NABILI KONG TRACK SUIT...
NAKS!
FERRARI RED 'YAN.
ABA, SENYORITO!
ANO BA'NG ALYAS 'YAN?
LAGYAN N'YO NG LOGO NG ISPAYDER SA DIBDIB...
GAGAMBABOY!

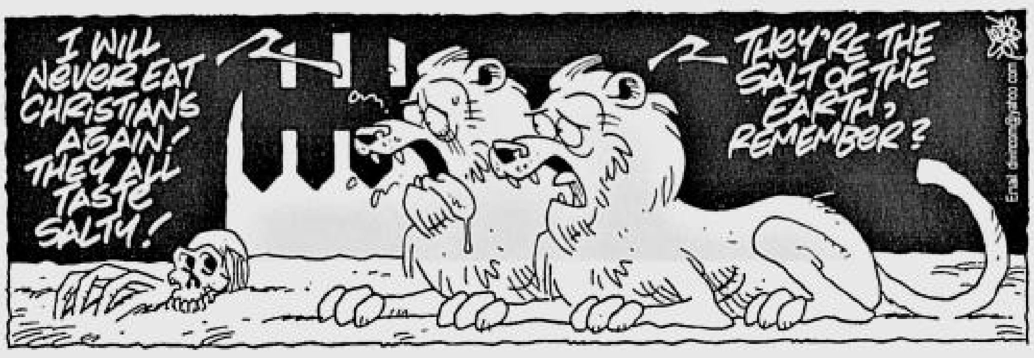
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'M GOING TO TRY A LITTLE POETRY ON YOU, SHNELLY.
SHOOT.
ROSES ARE RED, VIOLETS ARE BLUE...
ARE YOU WITH ME SHO FAR?

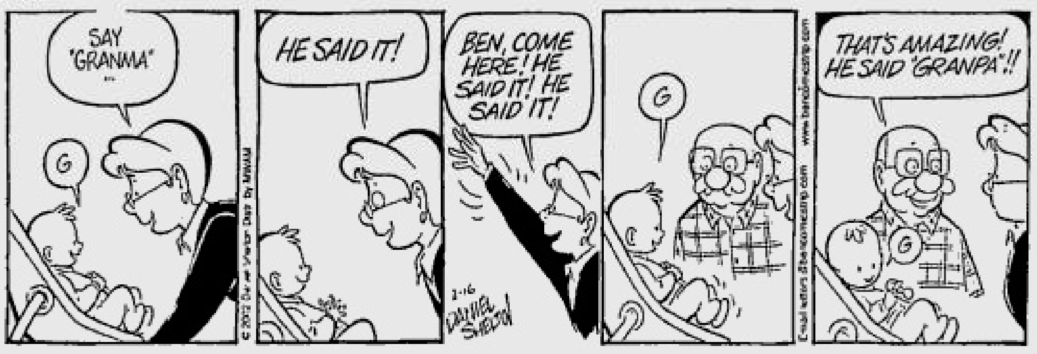
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


I WILL NEVER EAT CHRISTIANS AGAIN! THEY ALL TASTE SALTY!
THEY'RE THE SALT OF THE EARTH, REMEMBER?

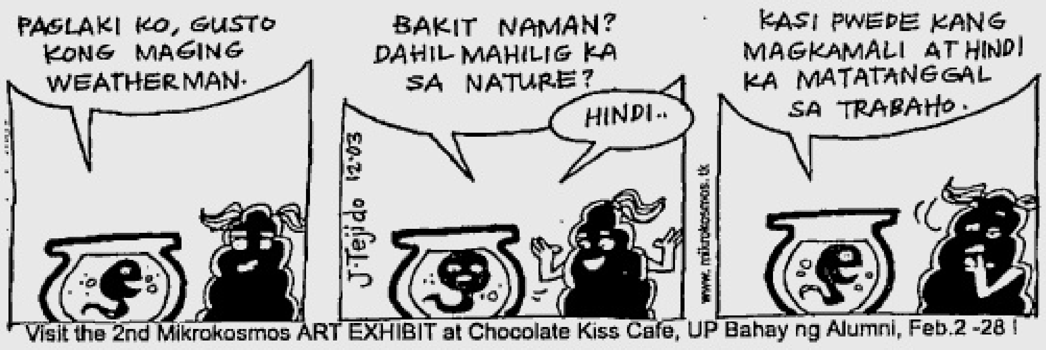
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SAY "GRANMA"
G
HE SAID IT!
BEN, COME HERE! HE SAID IT! HE SAID IT!
G
THAT'S AMAZING! HE SAID "GRANPA"!!
G

MIKROKOSMOS

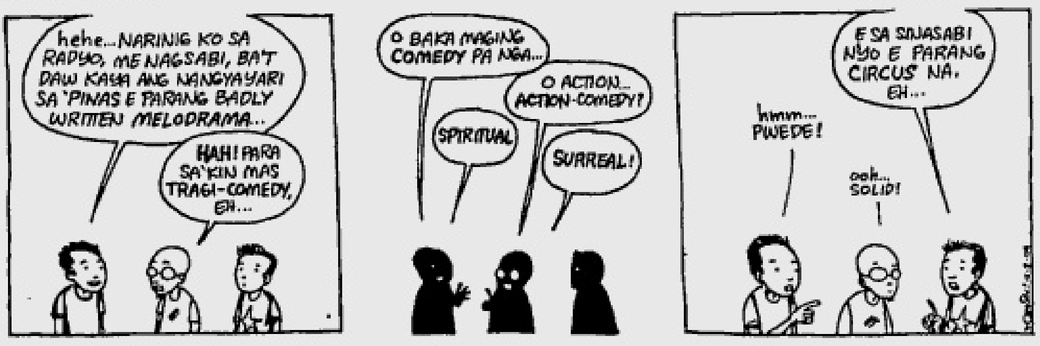
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PAGLAKI KO, GUSTO KONG MAGING WEATHERMAN.
BAKIT NAMAN? DAHIL MAHILIG KA SA NATURE?
HINDI..
KASI PWEDE KANG MAGKAMALI AT HINDI KA MATATANGGAL SA TRABAHO.
J. Tejido 12.03
www.mikrokosmos.tk

Visit the 2nd Mikrokosmos ART EXHIBIT at Chocolate Kiss Cafe, UP Bahay ng Alumni, Feb.2 -28 !

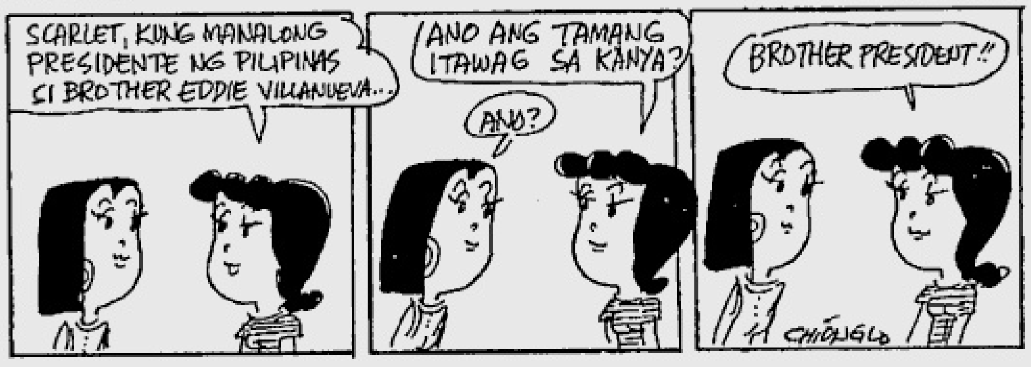
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


hehe... NARINIG KO SA RADYO, ME NAGSABI, BA'T DAW KAYA ANG NANGYAYARI SA 'PINAS E PARANG BADLY WRITTEN MELODRAMA...
HAH! PARA SA'KIN MAS TRAGI-COMEDY, EH...
O BAKA MAGING COMEDY PA NGA...
O ACTION... ACTION-COMEDY!
SPIRITUAL
SURREAL!
hmm... PWEDE!
E SA SINASABI NYO E PARANG CIRCUS NA, EH...
ooh... SOLID!

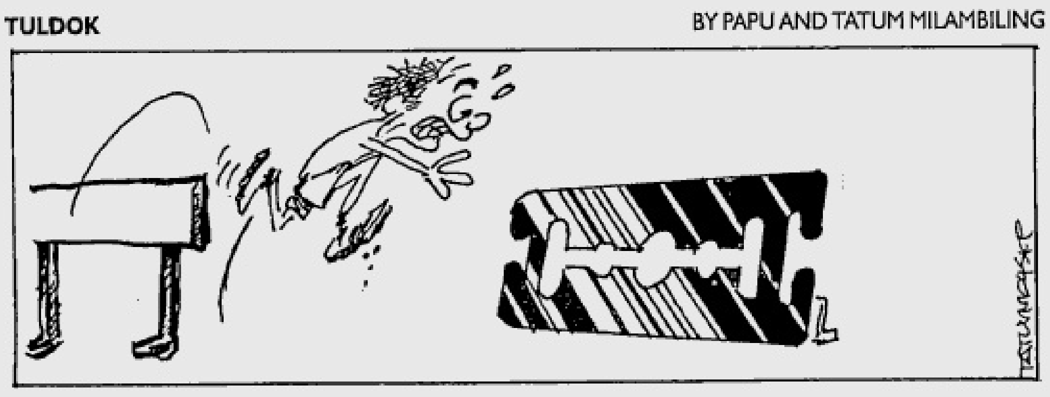
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SCARLET, KUNG MANALONG PRESIDENTE NG PILIPINAS SI BROTHER EDDIE VILLANUEVA...
ANO ANG TAMANG ITAWAG SA KANYA?
ANO?
BROTHER PRESIDENT!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



Celebrate romance with special dishes

SPEND a romantic evening at Chateau 1771 and Portico 1771 restaurants this Valentine's Day.

Savor Chateau 1771's signature dishes and Portico's popular offerings.

To celebrate Valentine, the first 20 people to make reservations in either restaurant will receive a complimentary overnight stay for two at Hotel Pontefino in Batangas City. The package includes dinner and special gifts for women.

Sentro 1771, the modern Filipino restaurant of the Chateau group, will also give away a Hotel Pontefino gift certificate to early guests.

Chateau 1771 is at El Pueblo Real de Manila, Ortigas, tel. 6317340. Portico 1771 at 1771 M. Adriatico Street, Malate, tel. 5232063; and Sentro 1771 at the 2/L of Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati.

DINING OUT

MANDARIN ORIENTAL celebrates love Feb. 13-15 with special menus. Paseo Uno offers Valentine's Day lunch and dinner buffets. The Tivoli has a six-course Valentine dinner menu while Tin Hau has an eight-course set dinner.
The Captain's Bar also offers a Valentine's Day dinner buffet. The Deli features Valentine confectionery, pralines and cakes until Feb. 15. Call 7508888.

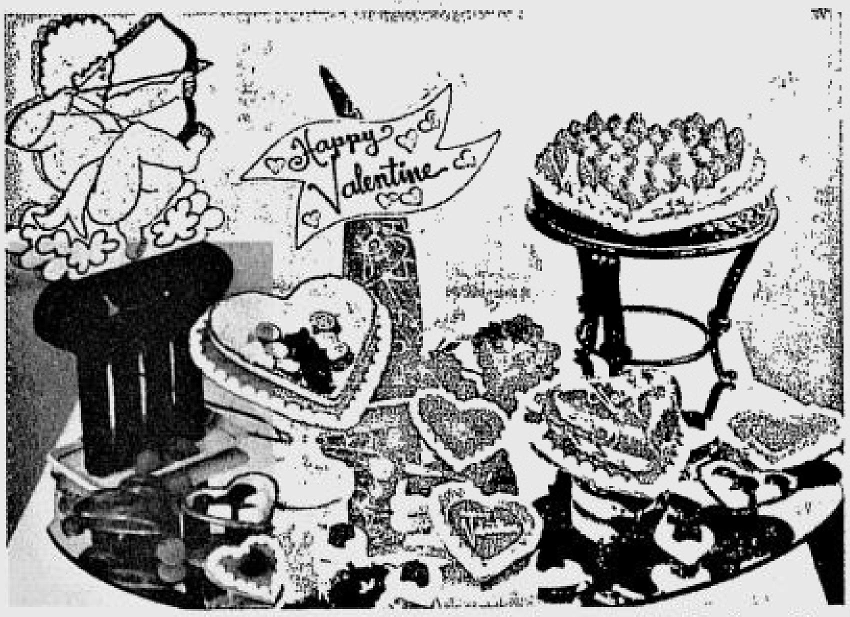
MANILA PAVILION HOTEL has Valentine treats Feb. 13-14. The Rotisserie presents dishes like Chicken Liver Parfait with Toasted Brioche, Smoked Salmon Roses on Blinis with Tarragon, Strawberry Royale Creme Brulee and Strawberry Mousse Parfait Everlasting.
The Pavilion Court offers Fresh Shredded Salmon with Jelly Fish, Sliced Pork Tenderloin with Special Sauce and Shrimp Lapu-Lapu Fillet with Crab Stick in Thick Soup, among others.
On Feb. 14, Café Coquilla has Veal Sweet Bread Terrine with Chicken and Cranberry Sauce, Crispy Breaded Seafood with Tartar Sauce, Cannelloni al Forno, Cherry Crumble Pie, Apple Strudel with Vanilla Sauce and Mango Cheese Cake in its menu. Call 5261212.

DUSIT HOTEL NIKKO'S Benjarong Thai, Thien Duong Vietnamese restaurant, Benkay Japanese, Ciao, The Cafe and Fiesta San Miguel offer five-course set dinners or buffet Feb. 13-14. The Lobby Lounge will offer a Valentine cocktail drink Feb. 13-14 while the Deli Shop features Valentine goodies for February. Call 8673333.

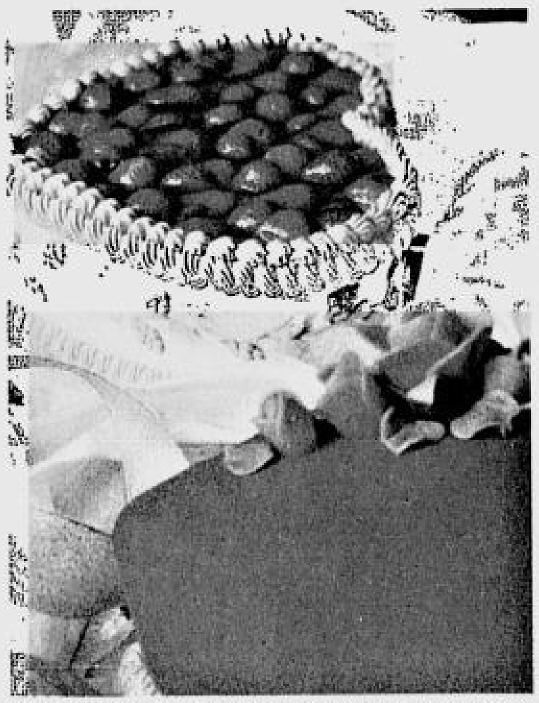
MAKATI Shangri-La's Red presents a six-course set dinner menu Feb. 13-15. It includes Duo of Foié Gras and Grilled Prawns with Mixed Greens and Red Onion Confit, Clam Chowder with Fresh Herb, Blood Orange Sherbet, Shellfish Bowl, Grilled Australian Sirloin with Mashed Potatoes, Asparagus and Mushroom Sauce, Livarot with Grilled Walnut Bread and Caramelized Mango and Sweet Dreams. Call 8400884.

T.G.I.FRIDAY'S offers Fillet Mignon with 200 grams of juicy tenderloin fillet wrapped in bacon and grilled, served with burgundy mushroom gravy, rice pilaf and chef's veggies. Crab Cakes are made with fresh lump crab meat and special seasonings. The dishes are available Feb. 13-15 at T.G.I.Friday's Glorietta, Robinsons Place Manila, Hotel Rembrandt in Quezon City, Alabang Town Center and the Brickroad of Sta. Lucia East.

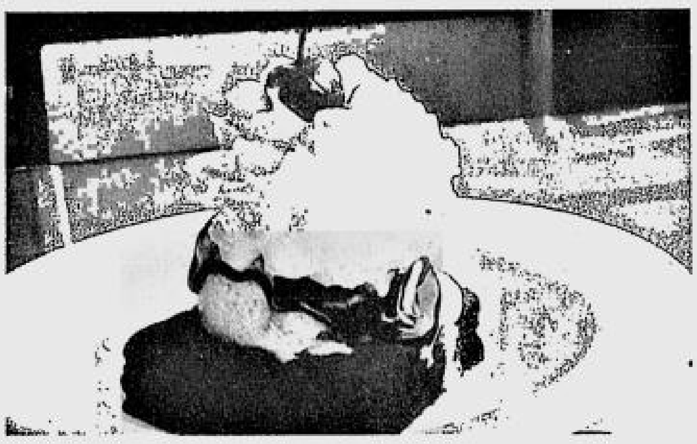
AFRODISIA GRILL in Greenhills offers special Valentine set menu available on Feb. 13-14. Call 7239705.



THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza's Cafe Plaza offers the longest buffet of Italian cuisine from Alfiere, Cantonese specialties from China Sea and food from Café Plaza starting today until Feb. 14. Call 5515555.



SULO Hotel offers a Valentine special drink, Sushi Teppanyaki, Strawberry Filled Cake and heart-shaped chocolates. Call 9245051.



CALIFORNIA Pizza Kitchen gives free dessert and coffee for Valentine's Day guests. To avail of the Valentine treat for two, get a CPK Valentine coupon when you buy flowers at Designer Blooms until Feb. 15. The coupon gets you a complimentary Hot Fudge Brownie dessert with two cups of brewed coffee for a minimum purchase of P750 in any CPK branch. Keep CPK receipts this Valentine. A total of P5,000 gets you a CPK VIP card. Or get a P100 CPK gift certificate rebate when you spend P1,000. CPK branches are on Tomas Morato, Shangri-la Plaza, Glorietta 3, Alabang Town Center and all Designer Blooms Metro Manila outlets.

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WINE and dine at Azzurro on Feb. 13-14. Call 8890569 or 8842239. Azzuro is Located at 104 Somerset Millenium, Aguirre St., Legaspi Village. In photo, Grilled Fillet of Seabass on new potato, blue crab salad and risotto

MIRO has a special treat for Valentine's Day. Couples can enjoy a nine-course meal. Main course is a choice from among Grilled Duckling in Mint Sauce, Steak a'la Poivre and Gindara Oriental. For dessert, there is Strawberry Jubilee. Diners will get a free glass of red wine and red roses for women. Reservations made on or before Feb. 13 will get a five percent discount on Miro's Valentine Menu. Call 6873439/6870880. Miro is at the 2/F Millennium Place Bldg., Meralco Ave. cor Julia Vargas St., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. In photo, Grilled Duckling in Mint Sauce.

Hot and spicy for the love month

HAVE a hot and spicy February with Oody's curry dishes. The restaurant's Dish of the Month recommendations highlight the curry, a well-loved spice. For the Thai Rice Noodles with Chicken Curry, (P129), the *kanomjin* or noodles are arranged like a heart on the plate. The chicken curry is served in a separate bowl.

Have a romantic evening with your loved one as you enjoy the Fried Rice with Seafood and Yellow Curry (P129).

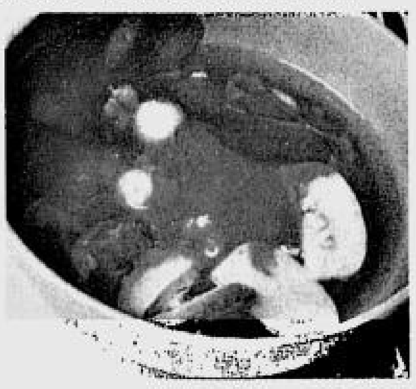
On Feb. 14, you can savor these hot and spicy dishes with a glass of wine. Oody's will give a free glass of wine for every order worth P500 on Valentine's Day.

You may also go for favorites like Sukhothai soup at only P149 or the Fried Spaghetti with Clams and Chili Paste at P129. Taste the mix of flavors of Thai Rice Noodles Big with Red Seasoning Sauce Soup at P139 and dessert of Mango with Sticky Rice, P75.

With cold beer, Oody's recommends the Spicy Egg Noodle Salad with Seafoods at P99.

Oody's menu has more than 100 noodle, rice, salad and appetizer dishes. The restaurant plays relaxing music as you enjoy your cold beer, wine or other drinks from the bar. Call Oody's branches on Tomas Morato (9201528) or at Robinson's Galleria (6365497/98) or Greenbelt 3 (7574258/59).

Oody's will open a branch soon at Robinson's Ermita.



THAI noodles bog with red seasoning sauce soup (P139)

Birmingham
Black Coffee
Athens
Frappé
Istanbul
Orta Şekerli Kahve
Dusseldorf
Kaffe mit Milch
Manchester
Malta
Kafé Espresso
Rome
Cappuccino
Munich
Einspänner
Paris
Café au Lait
Larnaca
Eleniko Café
London
Frappé Latte
Milan
Doppio Espressi
Frankfurt
Kaffee mit Sahne
Zurich
Schwarzer Kaffee
Nice
Café Liegeois

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Romance over a cup of coffee

STARBUCKS Frog Prince Bearista and Valentine Lollipals

THIS Valentine, Starbucks advances the cause of romance with some special offerings.

Featured on the whole bean menu is Caffè Verona, a sultry blend of smoky, sweet Italian Roast and mellow, hearty Yukon Blend.

Starbucks' special beverage for February, the Chocolate Cappuccino, blends chocolate with the richness of espresso and frothy milk.

Starbucks also has little sweet gifts for the special person like the heart-shaped Lollipal with the word "amore," and the Bearista, the cuddly teddy bear. This February, the Bearista is dressed like the Frog Prince, green suit and gold crown.

Starbucks also has its Valentine tumbler collection in 16 oz, 12 oz and 8 oz. sizes with Valentine-inspired designs like the Bella covered in hearts, or Romance of Italy.

The Amore ceramic mug comes in the grande 16 oz size in red or pink-glaze, with a whimsical heart-shaped handle.

Starbucks' Valentine Card comes with a coupon for a complimentary 12 oz Chocolate Cappuccino.

STARBUCKS Valentine Tumblers in 8 oz, 12 oz, 16 oz sizes. with spill-proof lids, plus a free beverage coupon

A Valentine getaway right in the city

AVAIL of Astoria Plaza's special "Zensational Suite Valentine" room promo and experience world-class amenities and first-class services at giveaway rates this Season of Hearts.

Check into a one-bedroom suite with that special someone for only P4,950 net. You get overnight room accommodations with complimentary breakfast for two, intimate candlelight dinner for two inside the suite with a romantic serenade and full butler service, a surprise Valentine token, complimentary use of the gym and the pool, complimentary mineral water, free local newspapers and 10-percent discount at Stresscape Spa. Express check-in is available upon request.

A two-bedroom suite big enough for a family or a group is available for only P5,750 net. You get complimentary breakfast for four with free use of the gym and the pool, complimentary mineral water, complimentary dinner for four with special Valentine cocktails, free local newspapers and 10-percent discount at Stresscape Spa.

The promo is valid until Feb. 15.

The Astoria Plaza, managed by Genesis Hotels & Resorts, is at 15 J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Business District, Pasig City. Call 6871111. Visit www.astoriaplaza.com

Mall's treats and freebies for day of love

FREEBIES and raffle prizes await shoppers at Festival Supermall in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang this Valentine.

For a minimum purchase of P1,000, a customer gets a raffle coupon for the Valentine Getaway promotion, which will run until Feb. 15. Prizes include full-body massage for two couples and Skinmaster treatment from Ageless Center, overnight stay at Vivere Suites (with buffet breakfast and complimentary use of health and fitness facilities) in Filinvest Corporate City, or Residence Inn in Tagaytay City or Blu Bianco Suites in Clark Field, Pampanga. Raffle will be held on Feb. 18.

Hershey's chocolates and other confectionery items are given away in Sweet SurPrize, a pick-a-prize promotion on Feb. 13-15 at Chef's Avenue. Customers can join the game when they consume or purchase food items worth at least P500 from any restaurant in the avenue.

Moviegoers can win instant prizes 1-10 p.m., until Feb. 15, with every purchase of two Festival Cinema Gold or premier tickets and purchase of either one medium popcorn or food items worth P50 (including two medium cups of Lipton Ice Tea) from Plato Wraps, Papa Heinz, West Lake or Chicago Flame Dog at C-Square, Level 4.

Customers have a chance to win prizes at the Food Junction after watching a movie. Its Valentine Delight promotion runs 11 a.m.-9 p.m. until Feb. 29. Holders of a single receipt worth a minimum of P100 (with one medium Lipton Ice Tea) from any dining outlet can win Lipton special gift packs.

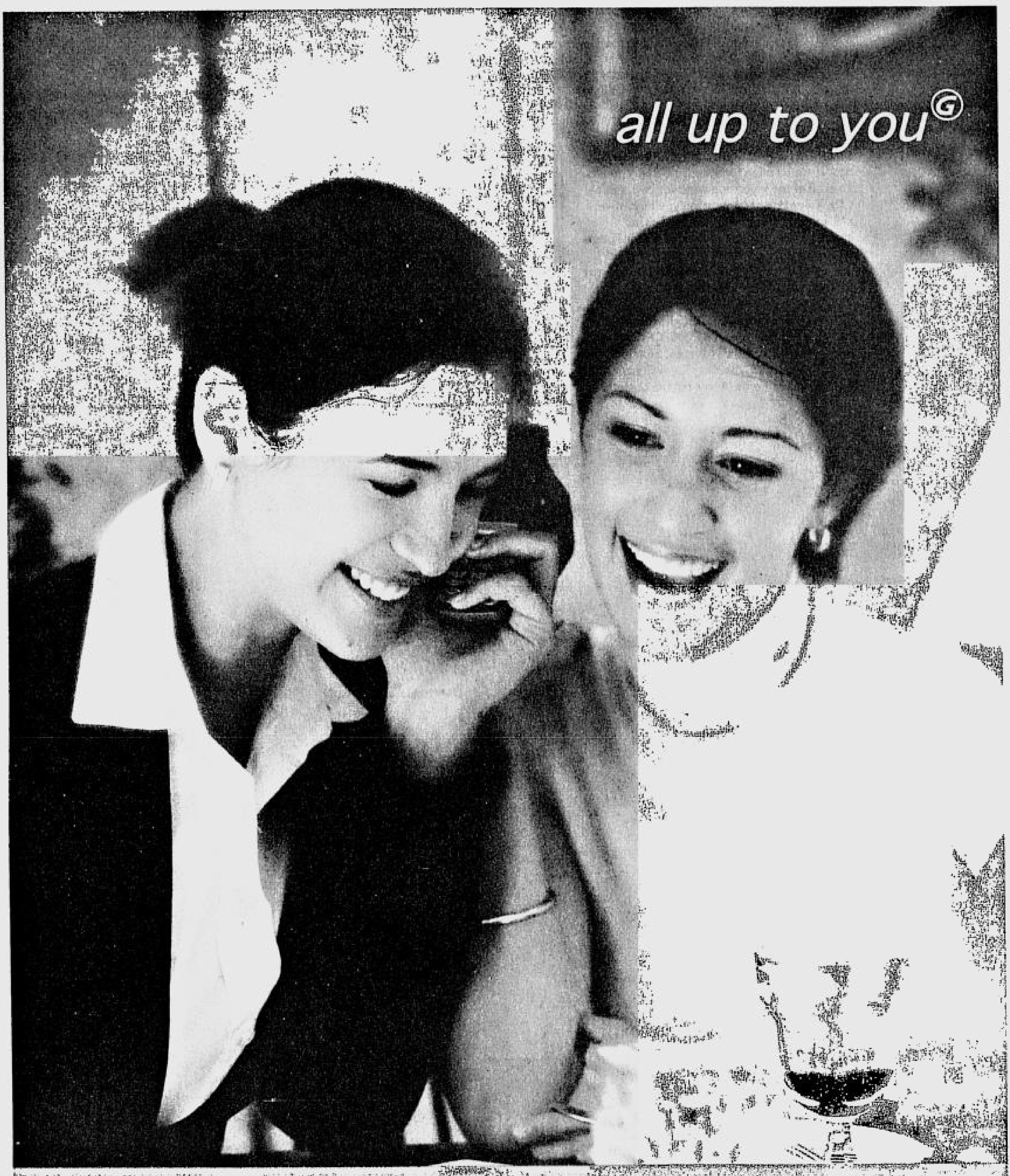
For the mall-wide Triple Weekend Sale on Feb. 13-15, participating stores offer discounts of as much as 75 percent. Call 8503514 or visit www.festivalsupermall.com

Don't just smell the roses

LE SOUFFLE'S chef Jessie Sincioco is concocting an unforgettable menu for people in love on Valentine's Day.

Diners will see and taste for the first time several original dishes that will make them say: "Roses are not just for giving but for eating, too!"

Visit Le Souffle at 2/F Wynsum Corporate Plaza, Ruby Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 6361613/14 or 6348945/71.



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Consumable Amount	P800	P1,200	P1,800	P2,500	P3,500	P5,000
Free Text	200	250	300	350	400	400
Globe to Globe	P6.50	P6.00	P5.00	P4.50	P4.00	P4.00
Globe to non-Globe	P7.00	P6.50	P6.00	P5.50	P4.50	P4.50
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Is there a chocolate-less chocolate cake?

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

MANY questions have been raised about chocolate, aphrodisiacs and, of course, the controversial Almost Better than Sex Cake recipe we published last week.

Here are some of them.

Is there a substitute for chocolate? I want to make a chocolate-less Chocolate Cake because I'm allergic to it.

MARISSA TANGCO

Yes there is a chocolate-less Chocolate Cake. It's called Mango Cake!

Sorry Marissa. Of all the things one could be allergic to, it had to be chocolate. Well, there really is no substitute for chocolate. Mocha Cake might be the next best thing.

I like to surprise my wife this Valentine. I know she loves Strawberries Dipped in Chocolate. Where can I buy this or, if they're not hard to make, can I have a recipe?

TEDDY CRUZ, Baguio City

Chocolate dipped strawberries are very easy to make. Just remember to pick your strawberries well and avoid buying packed berries with huge strawberries on top and real small, bruised and/or white berries below. You shouldn't have problems getting them from where you are. I usually have mine in a nice basket on a bed of fresh mint.

By the way, the recipe works well with bananas, marshmallows and just about anything you imagine. Excellent with champagne! *Kasta met ken ka Apo*, Happy Valentine!

Chocolate Dipped Strawberries

3 dozens large strawberries, unhulled

1 ½ c good quality bittersweet or white chocolate (chocolate chips or your favorite chocolate bar might work just as well)

Line large baking sheet with wax paper.

Wipe strawberries dry with paper towels.

On top of double boiler, set over simmering water, melt chocolate completely and until mixture is shiny and smooth.

Holding 1 strawberry by its green top, dip 3/4 of berry into melted chocolate.

Let excess chocolate drip off.

Place on wax paper-lined sheet (at this point you could melt white chocolate and drizzle it over the dark chocolate coating or vice versa, use your imagination).

Cool until chocolate coating is firm

Eat immediately, doesn't keep well.

I have always been a Choc-nut freak. Thank you very much for writing about Uva having Choc-nut ice cream. I've been there three times. Is there a nice chocolate cake that would go with the recipe.

CHARMAINE RUIZ

I do have a recipe from the Choc-nut king himself, a rich chocolate cake with strawberries and Choc-nut ice cream

Dark Chocolate and Walnut Soufflé Cake, Fresh Strawberry Salad and Choc-nut Ice Cream

Dark Chocolate and Walnut Souffle Cake

3/4 c butter

½ c cocoa powder

4 eggs, separated

1 c white sugar

1/3 c walnut halves, toasted and chopped

Pre heat the oven at 350°F

Melt butter and cocoa powder in a double boiler mix until blended. In another bowl, combine yolks and sugar. Beat to blend and to dissolve sugar.

Combine cocoa mixture and the beaten egg yolks. Add toasted walnuts. In a bowl, whisk egg whites until stiff and gently fold into the cocoa mixture. Divide batter into 6 greased ring molds or use one 9 inch cake pan. Bake using the water-bath method—cast molds or pan over a baking pan half filled with hot water.

Bake ring molds for about 17 to 20 minutes and cake pan for 30 to 40 minutes. Cool.

Fresh Strawberry Salad

2 c fresh strawberries, hulled and quartered

¼ c Grand Marnier

1 tbsp grated orange zest, optional

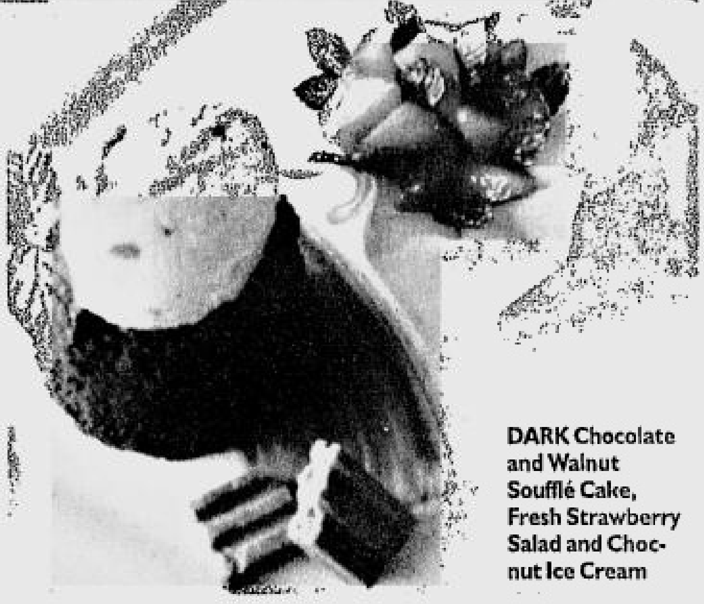
Toss strawberries, Grand Marnier, orange zest together. Cover and chill.

Then prepare fresh mint leaves, deep fried lumpia wrapper cups and 6 scoops or more Choc-nut ice cream, from Uva, of course.

On a plate, put a cake and top with a scoop of ice cream. Beside the cake, put fried *lumpia* cup filled with strawberry salad (to make the cup just put lumpia wrappers between metal molds cutting a little off the edges and press then deep fry the cup-shaped wrapper). Garnish with fresh mint leaves.

E-mail the author at reggie1@skyinet.net

FERNANDO Aracama is the creative mind behind Uva's Choc-nut ice cream.



DARK Chocolate and Walnut Soufflé Cake, Fresh Strawberry Salad and Choc-nut Ice Cream

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Serenades of the Heart

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Eastwood City Walk.
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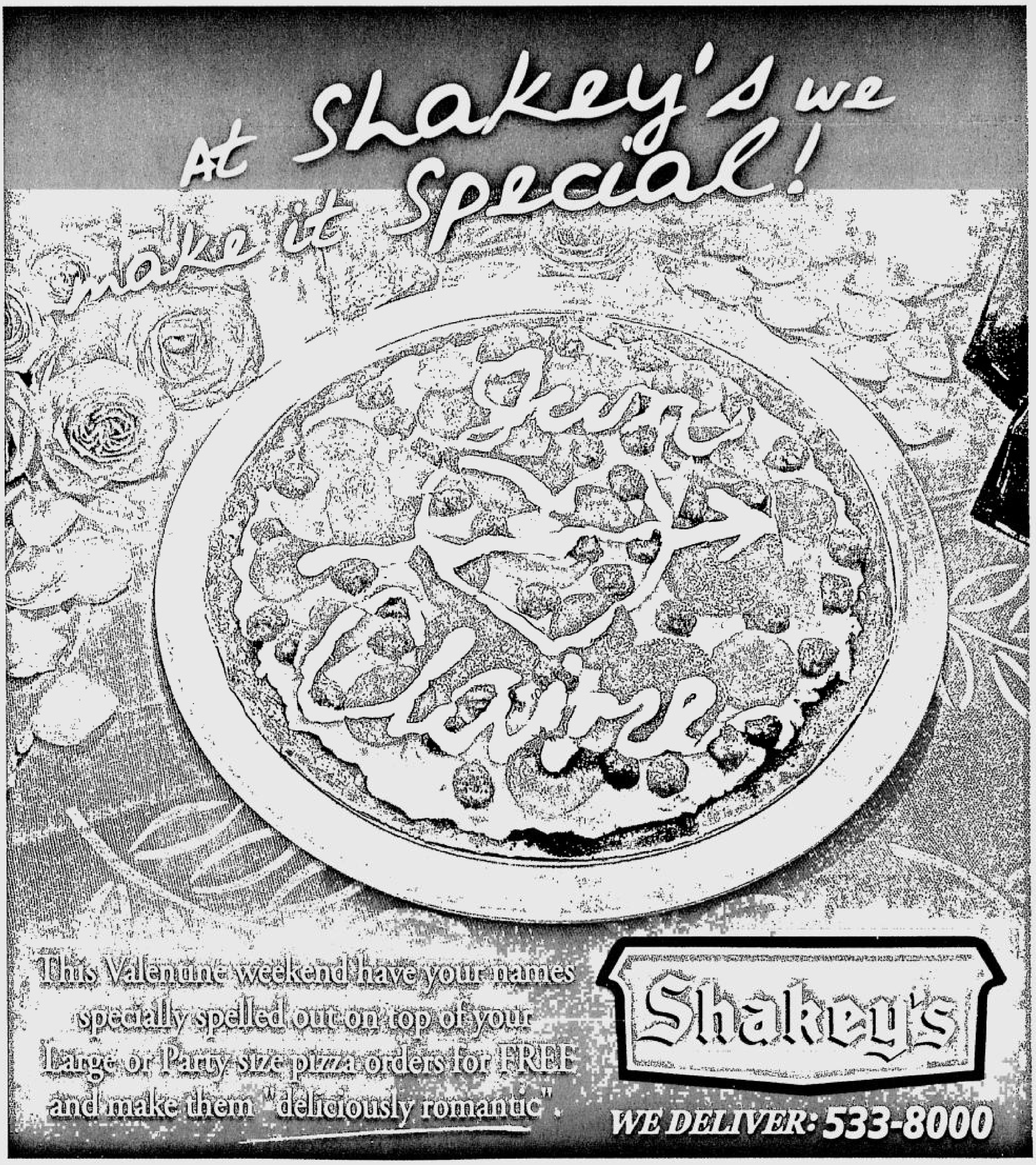

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is as pretty as it is tasty

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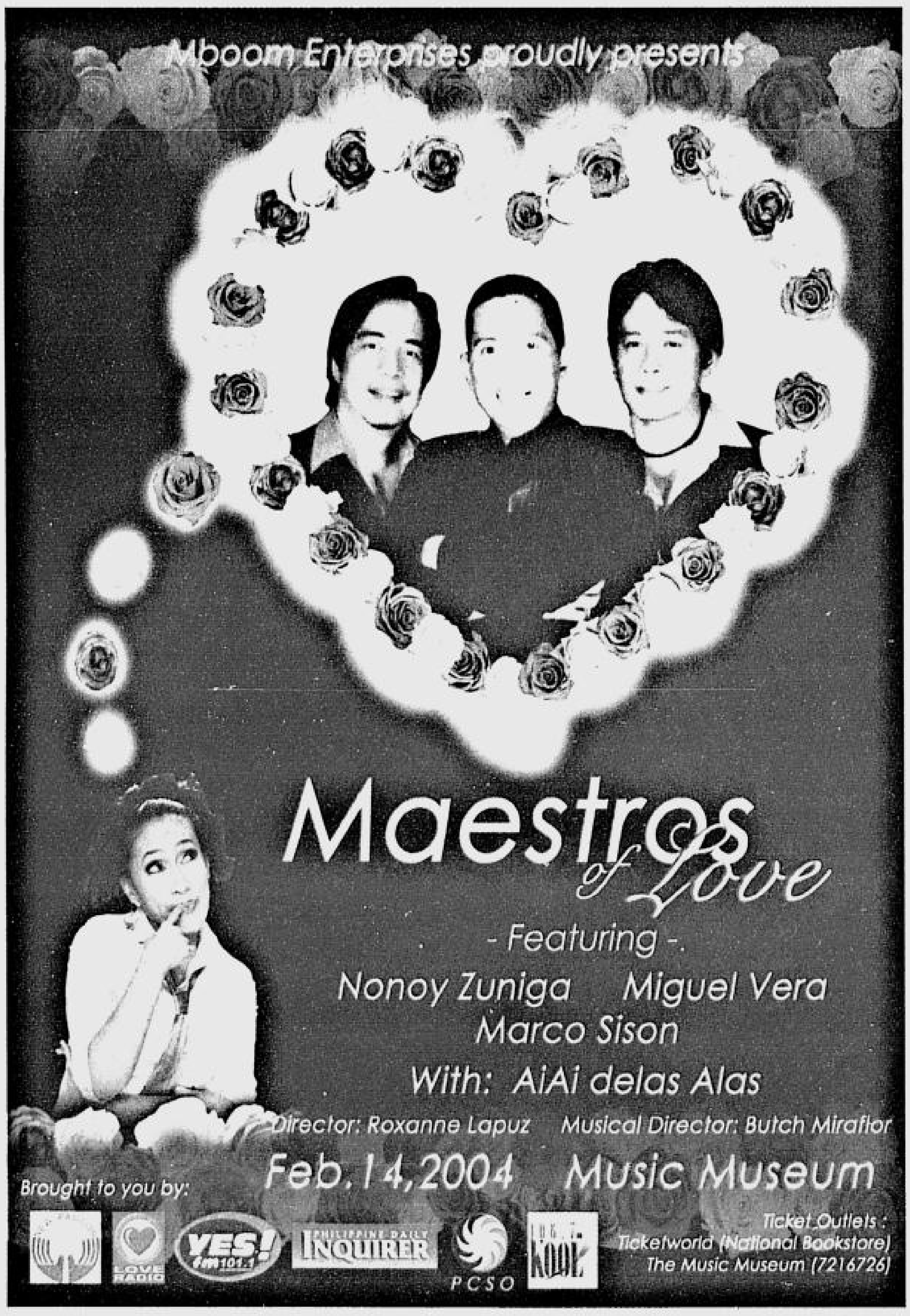
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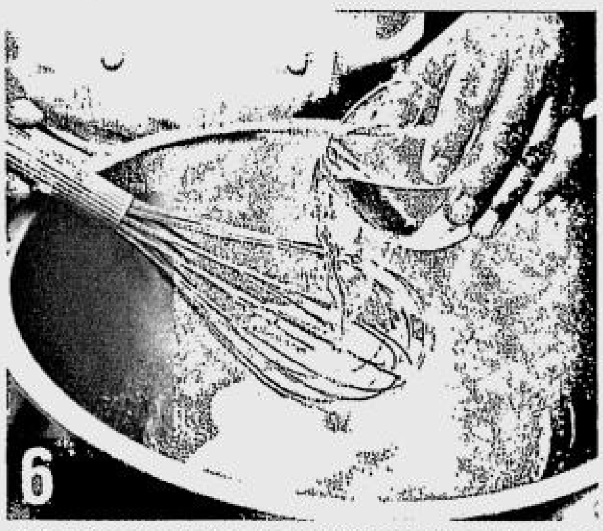
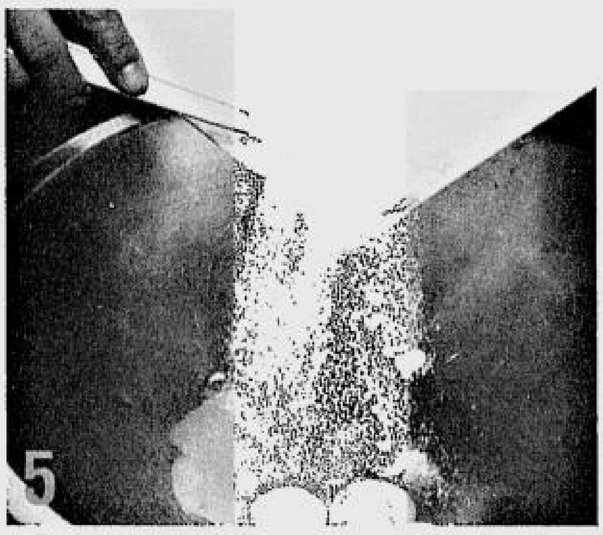
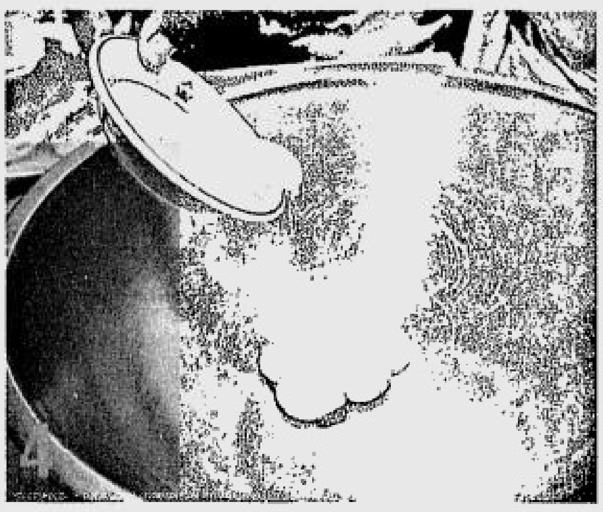


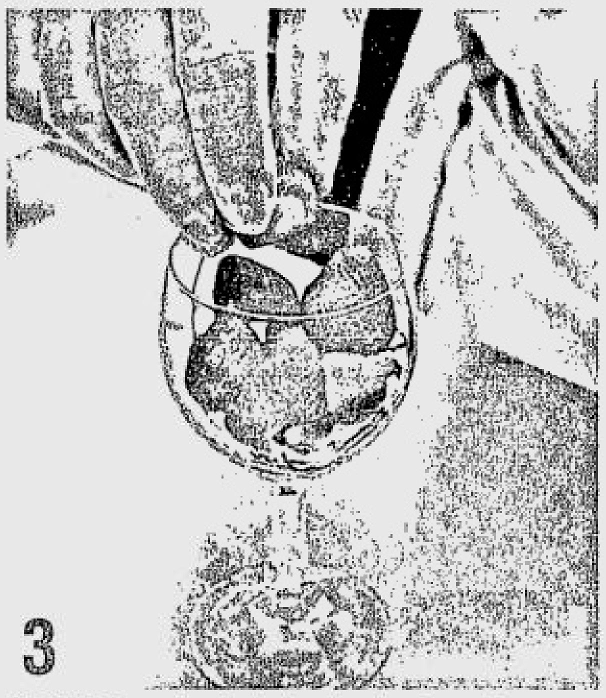
ADD white wine or champagne while whisking continuously under low heat.



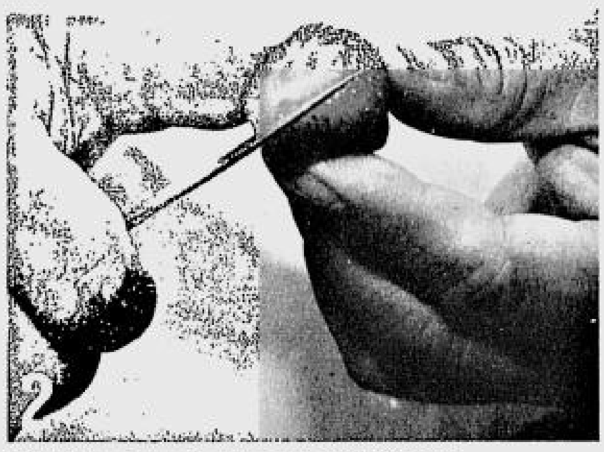
ADD sugar. Mix well.



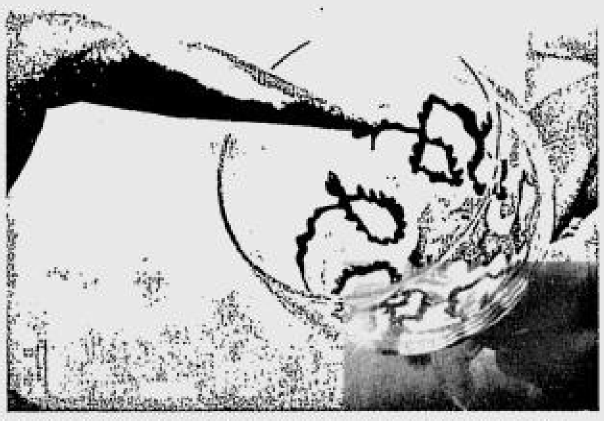
IN a mixing bowl, put egg yolks.



ARRANGE strawberries in the wine glass. Set aside.

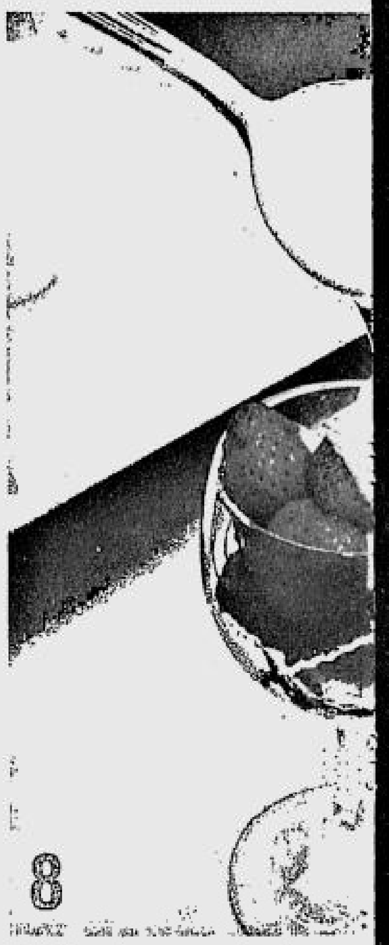


CLEAN fresh strawberries and cut their stems.



MELT white chocolate on a double broiler over low heat. Create nice swirls inside the wine glass. Do the same with the dark chocolate. Set aside.

WHISK for 20 minutes or until it bec



POUR sauce over strawberries. Top
and mango balls

Sweet

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

FOR a memorable and sweet e your romantic Valentine's meal, have fresh strawbe laced with a nice, warm, extra sm sauce. This Strawberry Mint Sabayon be the perfect way to cap a magical d.

Specially created for the seaso love by Demetrio Peñaflor, pastry ch Dusit Hotel Nikko (tel. 8673333). strawberry dessert can be done in under an hour and involves very actual cooking.

The Valentine treat is also as pret it is tasty.

Although strawberries are availabl year round, they are now in season so more plentiful and cheaper. Prices range P80 to 90 a kilo, depending on size.

STEP BY STE

On their own, strawberries are alr divine. Combined with other ingred for a different sweet treat, they are as great.

Sabayon is the French term for wh actually a great Italian des *zabaglione*. The light foamy sauc made by whisking egg yolks, wine sugar together over a gentle heat.

According to Chef Peñaflor, the w froth can also be served as a dessert self or as sauce over cake, fruit, ice cr or pastry.

To make the sabayon, the yolks thicken without coagulating and th sult must be very frothy.

The mint comes from a dash o liqueur Créme de Menthe.

For a romantic touch, the dess best served in a wine glass. Che ñaflor uses chocolates to make a ble-like pattern around the glass added impact. Dark and white ch lates are melted separately over a ble boiler.

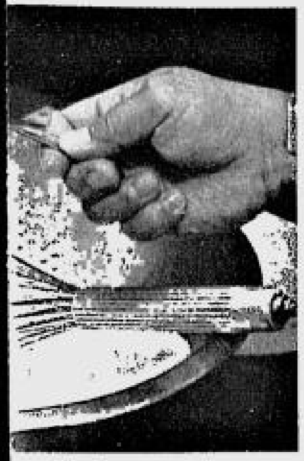
If you don't have a double boiler, saucepan with little water and bring boil. Place another bowl with choc —again separating dark and white- top of the saucepan. Make sure tha bowl doesn't touch the water.

The sabayon sauce makes eight ings.

Ingredients

- Fresh strawberries
- 6 pcs egg yolk
- 14 tbsp sugar
- 1 ½ c dry white wine or champagn
- 3 drops of Crème de Menthe (liqu
- nutmeg
- whipped cream
- mango balls
- semi-sweet dark and white choco (optional)

For suggestions, e-mail the auth vbaga@inquirer.com.ph



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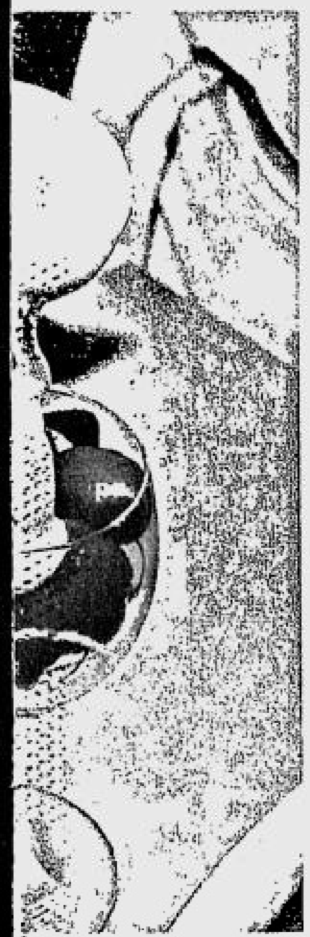

vith whipped cream, nutmeg

LUSCIOUS Strawberry Mint Sabayon

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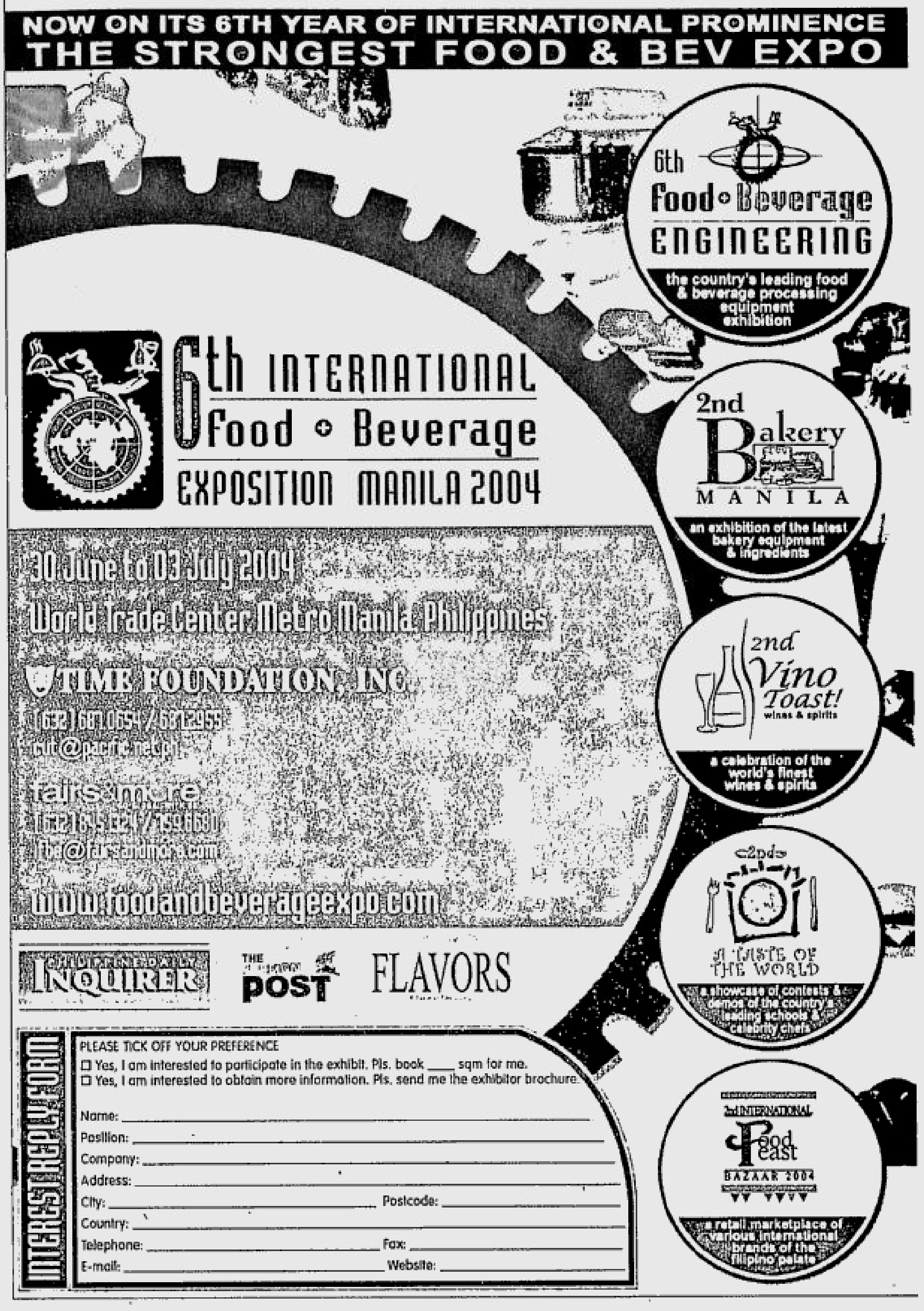

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Alay sa Puso
children's hour

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Pazzo (Powerplant Mall, Rockwell)

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Thai Kitchen (Robinsons Galleria)

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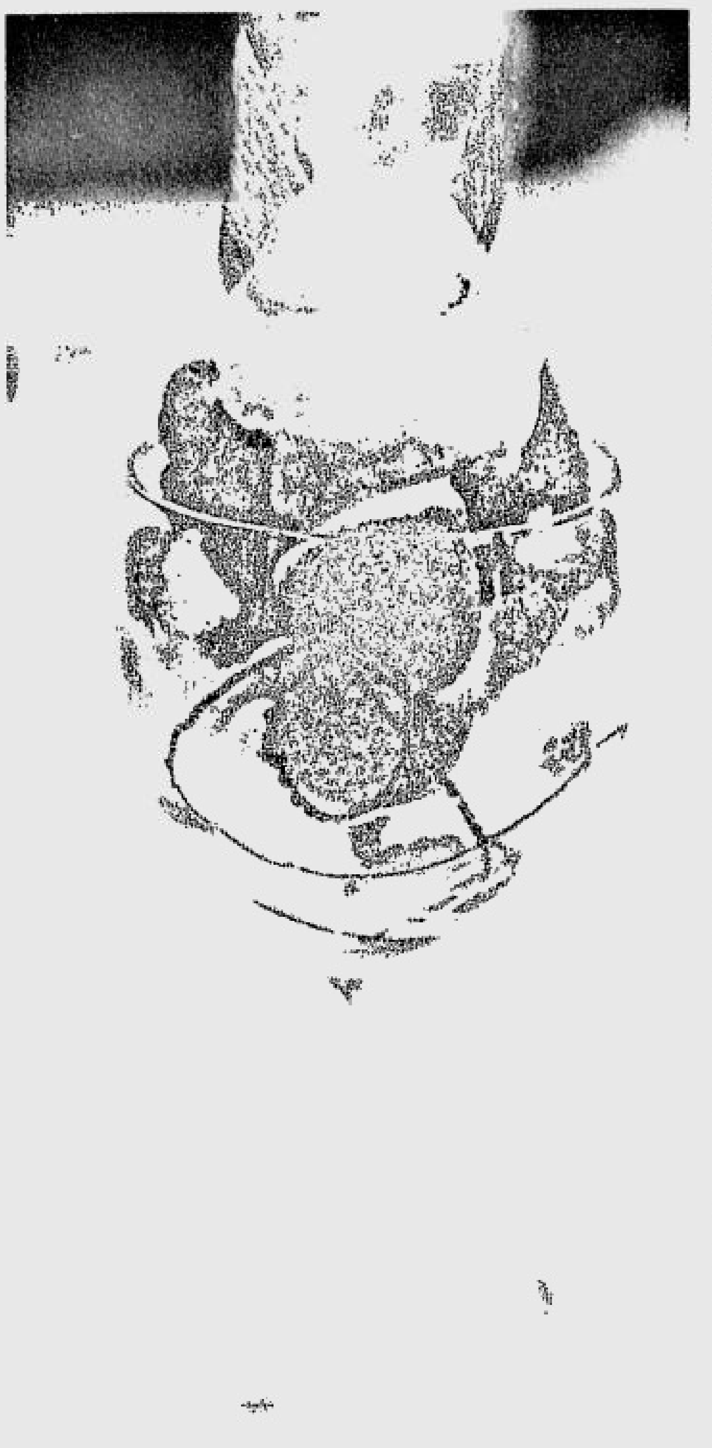
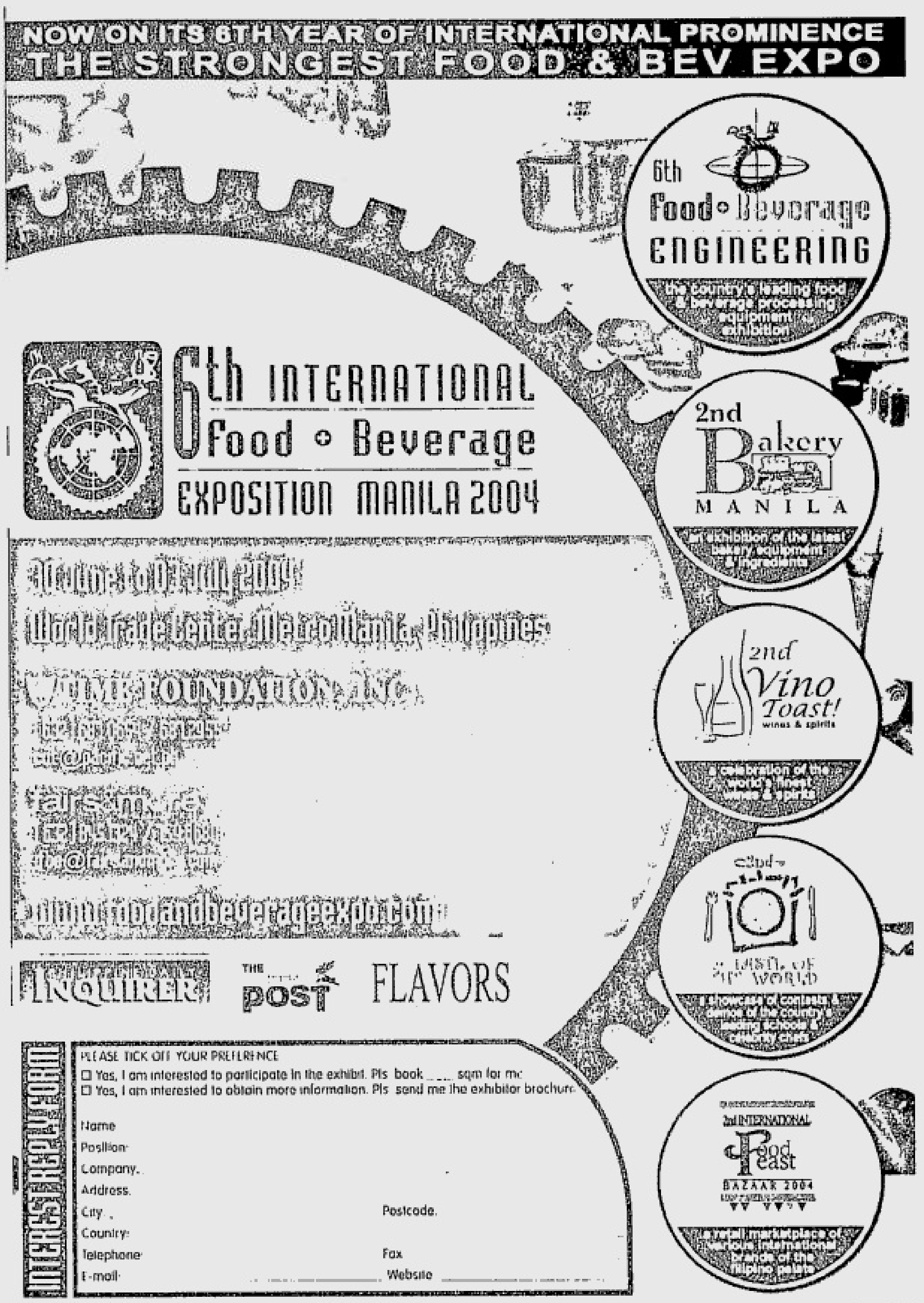
vith whipped cream, nutmeg



LUSCIOUS Strawberry Mint Sabayon



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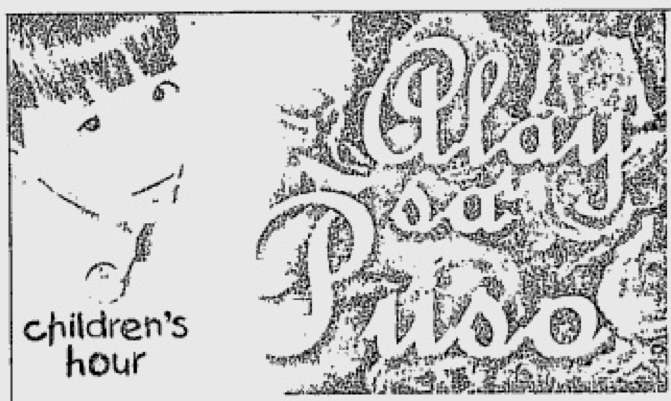

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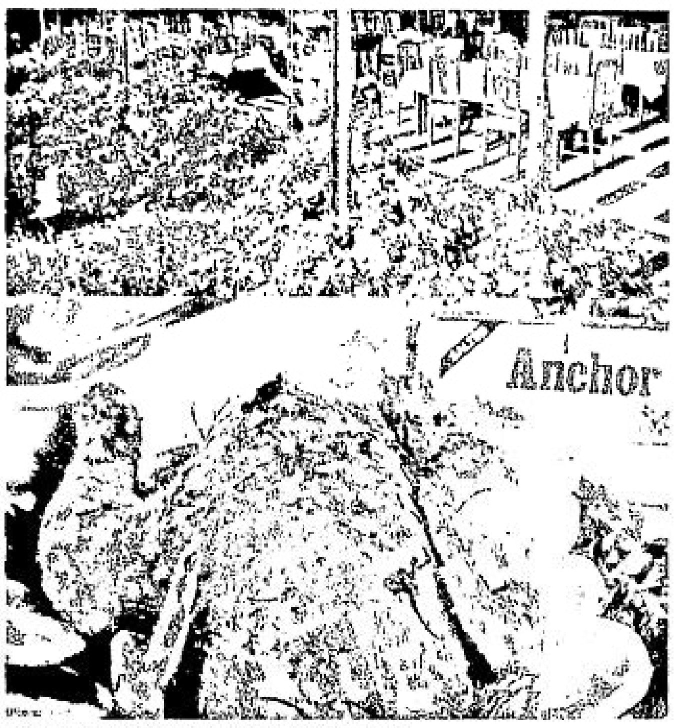


ROSEMARY Chicken at Sonya's Garden

SONYA's Garden has added to its already numerous attractions.

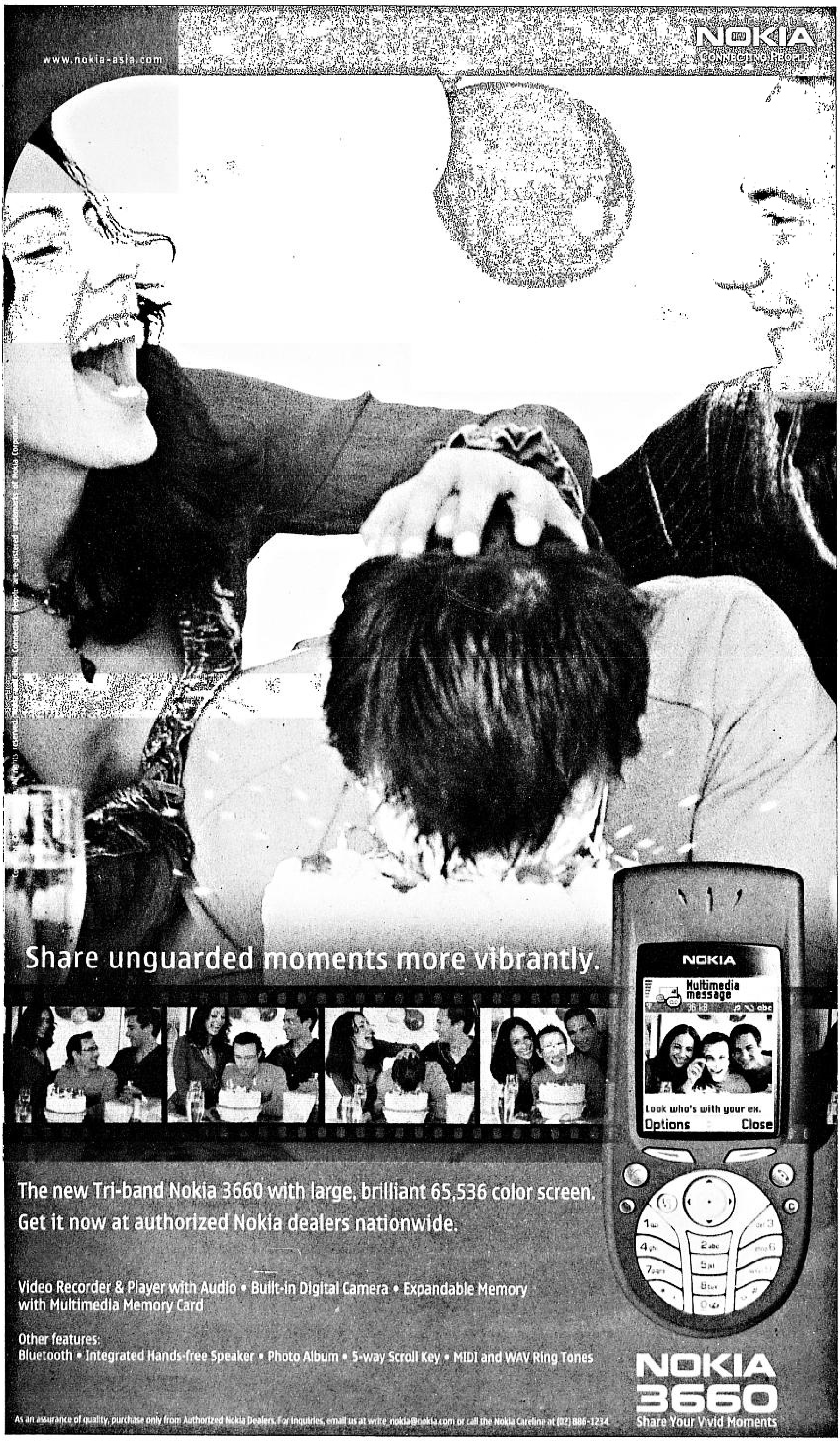
Guests can now enjoy two new recipes—Salmon with Capers, and Rosemary Chicken, which are only available upon request.

The Salmon with Capers uses Anchor Butter, which blends well with the capers and lemon. The butter brings out the best in the salmon. Anchor Butter is also one of the secret ingredients for Rosemary Chicken.

In Antipolo City, the Swiss restaurant Vieux Chalet owned by Susan Haessig has used fresh organic and homemade products. Butter is one of the few exceptions. The restaurant uses Anchor Butter in the Vieux Chalet's Lamb Chops, for instance, and its sauces.

Another Antipolo restaurant, the Crescent Moon, also uses Anchor Butter in its most popular dishes like Celery Soup, Chicken with Mint, Fish with Garlic.

LAMB Chops at Vieux Chalet is a Swiss-Filipino culinary delight.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Beginner's cooking classes

THE REGGIE Aspiras School of Culinary Arts announces the schedule of classes for the second half of the month.

Feb. 13—Pasta 101 (Part 1): Arrabiata, Pesto, Neopolitan, Alfredo with Mixed Mushrooms and Four Cheeses, Al Amatriciana, Authentic Lasagna al porno, Black Pasta.

Feb. 14—Barbecue 101: Learn how to prepare Baby Back Ribs, Pork Chops, Tuna Steaks, Lamb Chops, Hamburgers, Chicken, Mixed Meat, Vegetables and Fruit Kebabs; Rubs and Marinades; 10 Barbecue Sauces from Basic to Exotic; Salads and Side Dishes.

Feb. 16—Gourmet Filipino breakfast: Garlic Rib-eye Tapa with Soufflé, Bagoong Omelet and Herbed Garlic Rice; Sirloin Herb Tapa with Stuffed Kamatis; Scrambled Eggs; Maple Tocino with Sherry; Sweet Cassava Hash and Fried Eggs; Garlic and Herb Longanisa with Rolled Omelet; Marinated Milkfish Bellies with Steamed Rice in banana leaves.

Feb. 18—Chocolate Collection (all-new): The Ultimate Chocolate Éclair; Chocolate Dome Cake with Vanilla Butter Cream; Old-Fashion Moist Chocolate Cake with Boiled Fudge Frosting and Custard Sauce; Decadent Chocolate Cake with Caramel Sauce; and Sinful Chocolate Soufflé.

Feb. 20—Budbud Pinoy Rice Toppings: Aligue Rice with Oysters, Crab and Vegetable Omelette; Crisp Lechon Kawali with Serrano Chili Sauce and Stewed Mongo Rice; Bagoong Pandan Rice with Crisp Catfish Ukoy; Buttered Pandan Rice with Pan-grilled Lapu-lapu and Prawns in Uni Sauce; Ube Rice with Grilled Honey Barbecue Chicken

Feb. 21—French 101: Lentil Salad; French Onion Soup; Duck a l'Orange; Bœuf Bourguignon; Coq Au Vin; Crème Brulée.

Feb. 23—Pizza Basic Made Easy: Thin, Thick and Stuffed Pizza Dough (toppings: Garlic and Anchovy, Four Cheeses, Seafood, Italian Sausage and Mixed Meat, Fresh Tomatoes, Grilled Vegetables and Pesto); Overstuffed Pan Pizza

Feb. 25—Tex-Mex Classic 101 (all new): Chili con Carne; Taco; Enchilada and Burrito Buffet-Meat, Seafood, Salsas and Sauces; Refried Beans; Nachos with Dipping Sauces; Tamales, Mexican Rice

Feb. 27—Swiss and German Favorites 101 (all new): Raclette; Cheese Fondue; Beef Fondue with Classic Sauces; Spareribs and Sauerkraut; Viener Schintzel with Cheese Noodles; German Potato Salad; Bavarian Cream with Strawberries

Call 9289296, 9273008, 6335162, 6474744 or 0917-8399888. Look for Cynthia or Julius. All classes start at 10:30 a.m.

A wide selection of gourmet food items to go is also available.

Make stylish appetizers

THE SAN Miguel PureFoods Culinary Center, with chef Larry Celeridad, will conduct a class on how to make elegant hot and cold appetizers and give tips for their stylish presentation in "Party Pizzazz," Feb. 24, 1:30-4:30 p.m., at the San Miguel PureFoods Culinary Center, Legazpi corner Eagle Streets, Barrio Ugong, Pasig.

Fee is P500, inclusive of snacks.

As a bonus, a seasoned bartender will share classic and trendy cocktail drinks. Call 6719876, local 2771, 402, 404 and 405. Limited slots available.